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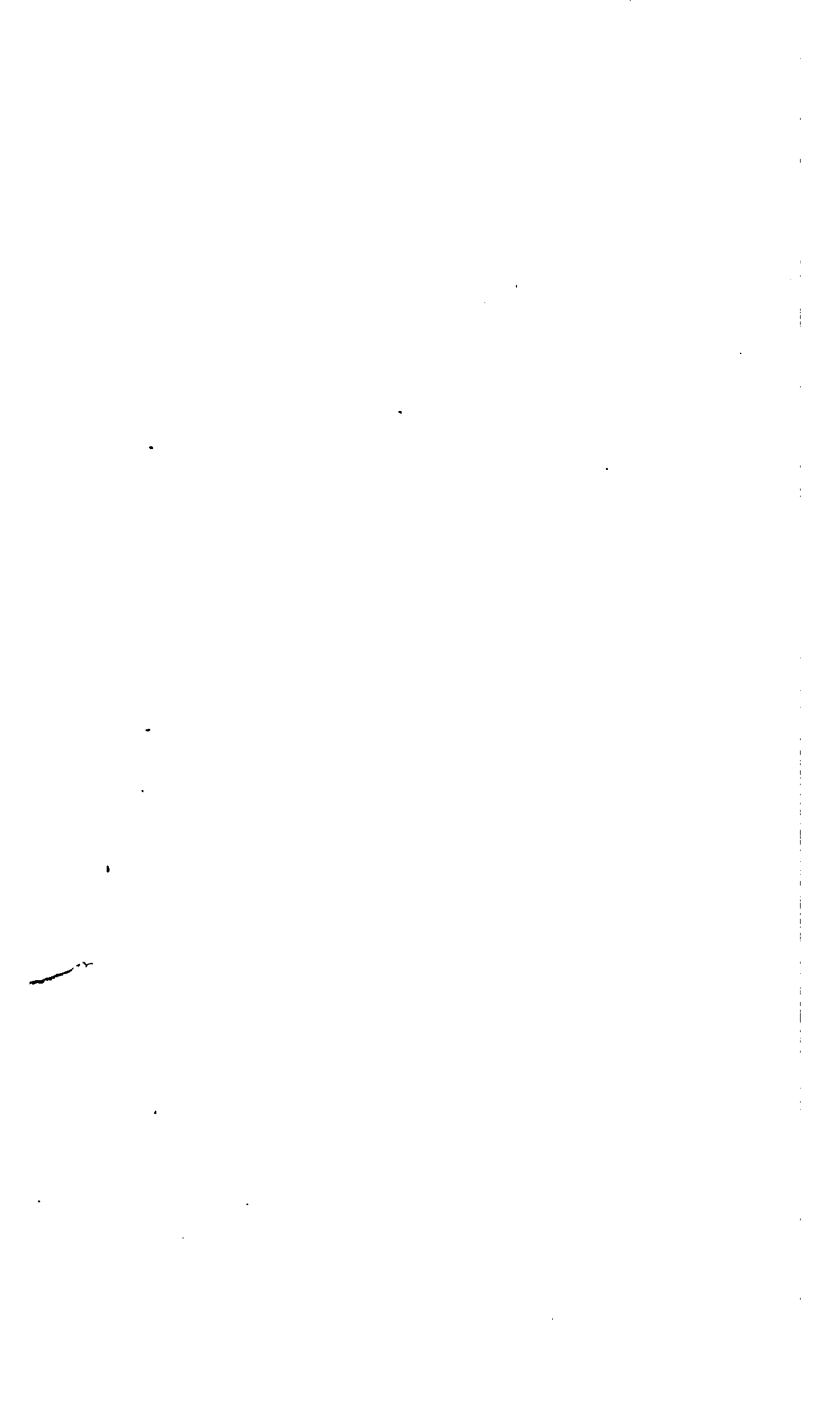
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**BEATEN PATHS;
AND THOSE WHO TROD THEM.**



BEATEN PATHS; AND THOSE WHO TROD THEM.

BY

THOMAS COLLEY GRATTAN,

AUTHOR OF 'HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS,' 'TRAITS OF TRAVEL,'
'CIVILIZED AMERICA,' ETC.

"Hoo! Hoo! I am almost giddy with roving about. I could have ranged farther yet, but am not well able to dive into profundities. I leave those things to stronger wits."—*Burton's 'Anatomy of Melancholy.'*

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

SECOND EDITION.

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TO

H. SEYMOUR TREMENHEERE, ESQ.

MY DEAR TREMENHEERE,

In the battle of life, as in every other battle, the loss of our friends, by death, and sometimes by *desertion*, is at once the most painful and the most difficult to supply. The only resource is in judicious recruiting, to fill up the broken ranks. I have been lucky enough to enlist, from time to time, some generous volunteers; none among them more valued than yourself. As a feeble return for many proofs of regard from you and YOURS, I offer you the dedication of these volumes.

T. C. GRATTAN.

London, December 1861.

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PREFACE

TO THE SECOND EDITION.

ONE of the best consequences of authorship is its letting us see ourselves as others see us. Could we be satisfied that they saw us rightly the result would be perfect. But criticism is so conflicting and contradictory that it perplexes us in the extreme. Reviewers, however candid as to what they think of a writer, may be wrong in assuming that they know him through his works. They assuredly at times attribute to mistaken feelings passages which they do not approve of.

Reviewing has, no doubt, its rights as well as its duties; and whoever puts his name on a title-page is fair game—but he should have fair play. A sensitive author may not appreciate the stern equity of the judge whose ink has too much gall in it. He may in his turn ascribe motives, no

matter how unparliamentary it is. He may fancy that envy or malice crouches under the cloak of his cutter-up, like the stolen fox eating into the vitals of the Spartan boy ; and he is more compassionate than angry towards the critic whose paltry vice carries its own punishment.

But authors, however shocked by a verdict of condemnation, are often charmed by a sentence of eulogy. The latter is naturally adopted by them as their proper estimate, and the stringent severity of their censors is neutralized, if not altogether lost on them. Though staggered by the blow they fall softly into the arms of their friends. They are neither better nor worse for their punishment, and the executioner has his labour for his pains.

If the object of the over-cruel critic is to damage the sale of the book, his success is doubtful, and at best limited. Most people sympathize with the victim of irresponsible power, whether it be political or literary. If a whelming flood of censure sweeps over a work, it no doubt swamps it ; but when under-currents of laudation buoy it up, it becomes an object of interest and curiosity, and the world at large likes to judge for itself. Thus a work is actually helped

on its course by the conflicting eddies it encounters, and it is questionable whether the blame or the praise gives it the greater circulation.

This very book, for a second edition of which I am hastily preparing a preface, is possibly indebted to a little over-severity for its success. I am told it has been hit hard by some, while I know it has been most generously treated by others. It is a rule with me not to read any notice of my writings, unless I previously understand that it is done in a fair spirit and on the whole favourable. I am now too old to learn under the lash. I dislike to encounter harshness, that could not improve and might annoy me; I should not in any case remonstrate or reply. What's the use of a war of words? Our actual civilization puts a bar to what was formerly thought a manly or dignified result to a quarrel. An argument on paper leaves all questions pretty much as they were. Almost every one writes piquantly and well on subjects personal to themselves. The controversialist who has the last word generally has (or seems to have) the best of it. And the gentlemen who slap or spit in each other's faces, in the present state of our

social morality, have only to turn the other cheek or wipe out the insult—with their handkerchiefs.

But these passing remarks have no particular application here. With a blissful ignorance of my disparaging critics, I regret that I have no personal knowledge of many who have spoken kindly and encouragingly of these volumes. To them, and the large number of private friends who have found my Ways—whether High or Bye or Beaten—ways of pleasantness, I am, as ever on like occasions, very grateful. In giving them my wholesale thanks on behalf of the portions that hit their fancy, I am sure they will not accuse me of unworthy motives for what they may not sympathize with. The liberal-minded always make allowance for one who ventures to speak out, and at the same time fairly, of those he sketches, who is no Hero-worshipper, and who wishes to value just for what he may be worth a dead Poet or a living Prince.

I would willingly take any well-meant hint, or modify certain portions of my book, if I could conscientiously adopt advice or submit to strictures. But let the candid reader judge of my difficulty from a few instances.

One reviewer, who in a most indulgent mood passed a high encomium on the second volume, recommends his readers to pass by the first as not worth reading.

Another, in reference to that discarded volume, says it contains "descriptions of scenery and personal adventures which are among the best things the author ever achieved."

In some quarters those very adventures are pronounced as of little or no interest; while certain passages are considered "insufferably prosy;" and on the other hand, it is stated that "the author, in a few happy words, hits off the peculiarities of people race and incident with great skill, in a style that never flags." And again, in a different article, that "none of the anecdotes are stale; nothing is spun out; nothing is given second-hand; and the freshness and *naïveté* in the style makes us rank it very high in the class under which it is comprehended."

A very favourable notice concludes by excepting from its eulogy, and recommending in future editions the omission of one particular chapter, which is pointed out by other critics as replete with merit.

‘ Beaten Paths ’ have been, in short, alluded to by more pens than one, as “the most popular” and “the best” book of the season. And to wind up these remarks, I will give a couple more extracts—one of them forwarded to me most kindly by an old acquaintance, as a serious opinion, the other pointed out to me by “a d—d good-natured friend,” as what he designated a capital joke, by some lively small Unknown.

No. 1.

“A more interesting, instructive, and amusing book we have not read for many a day. Independent of its value, as giving the stirring events of by-gone times, throwing fresh jets of light upon old topics, by new illustrations and anecdotes, the work is remarkable by the colouring power, play of fancy, and lucidity of style with which its descriptions are enlivened.”

No. 2.

“This is another contribution to the mountains of dead ashes, wreck, and burnt bones. It is a collection of unimportant anecdotes and valueless reminiscences.”

And so I now leave the work to the candour of all readers, unaltered, with its imperfections on its head, to stand or fall, in whatever position an impartial public may place it.

And in doing so I may be allowed to call attention to the chapter on Ireland in the first volume, the tenor of which has been most deplorably affected by accounts of the recent murderous outrages in that (once more) unhappy country, still persecuted and tyrannized over by its own bad passions and its too impulsive feelings, against which who can prescribe and carry out the fitting remedy?

And may I be excused in reverting to the slight sketches on Italian Art (Vol. II. Chap. IX.) which may become more prominent, since the opening of our Great Exhibition has brought to light one of its more striking illustrations?

The charming, timidly-tinted statue, known as "Gibson's Painted Venus," but which should be called the ghost of a Venus, so little life-like in colour, and with its faint imitation of glass eyes, is certainly a slide (it has not firmness enough to be called a step) in the right direction.

It is to be hoped that the gifted sculptor will, on his next move in the same course, associate

himself with some artist, congenial in taste, but bolder in touch than the tinter of the yellow-haired lassie, who now stands revealed to the critical eyes of all Europe's delegations at Brompton.

LONDON,

June 20th, 1862.

BEATEN PATHS.

CHAPTER I.

THE SUBJECT.

A PROTEST AGAINST AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

WHEN a man sits down, or as in my case, stands up, to write a book, "the world before him where to choose" a subject, it might be thought that his task was as easy as his matter is abundant. But, unless he has one particular fixed idea in his mind, it is then he really feels the force of a hackneyed phrase, and sinks like an overloaded miser, under the *embarras de richesses*. He knows not how or where to turn; as a settler, wandering in some vast territory open to exploration, is bewildered by the wealth of Nature, and long uncertain where to pitch his tent.

How is the puzzled writer to decide, let his capacity be what it may? What topic is un-

touched in history, what region untrodden in travel, what passion in romance not torn to tatters? To this last question echo answers "Tatters!" and the inquirer throws down his pen in despair.

But a bright thought flashes across his brain. Is it then necessary to break new ground; will nothing but novelty go down? Must one dive for fresh pearls in ocean's depths, delve for strange gems below the soil, peer into chaotic nebulae for glimpses of a hidden planet, or torture imagination for strained pictures of the human mind? Is there no interest but in the vague and mystical? Cannot the real take place of the ideal; and may not something be gleaned from the close-reaped field, even though the harvest has been gathered in?

In the hope that something more encouraging than echo will answer Yes! I recover the grey goose weapon I have so often dipped in ink. I yield to the impulse which irresistibly prompts it. I renounce the temptings of an abstruse ambition, leave to others to drag the waters of fancy for lost treasures, and turn to matter-of-fact recollections, floating like disembodied spirits on the beaten paths of life.

I am for awhile whelmed in the crowd of rushing thoughts. Scene after scene rises up

and disappears. Figures are visible for a moment. Groups blend with groups. They come and go again and again in quick succession. Words long forgotten tingle in my ear. Feelings that were as dead prove that they only slept. The heart, as of old, beats high or sinks as memory flows and ebbs. Wave after wave curls rampant on the strand, and each one deposits some relic of the deep sea of sentiment,—a weed, a portion of wreck, a withered hope, a worn-out joy. Then laughing remembrances sound like weird voices in the brain. Gay passages of life dance on the creamy surf in iris-coloured tints. The thirsty mind would drink them in once more. But they are gone. The swelling surge has swallowed them. What next? No matter! 'Tis the same revolving whirl of thought, confused, intangible, yet true,—terribly true, for happiness gone by, for sorrow ever-living.

How to separate or classify those commingling memories. What reject and what retain. Into what shape, fashion your materials. What to begin with; where to end. Such are the queries you may put for ever to yourself, with no one to reply, no counsellor at hand. Luckily for your design, perhaps; for such a one might place his finger on his lips, as the ancients wrote "silence" on the doors which shut in their symposiums, to

signify the wisdom of keeping secret every social scene of life.

Left to oneself, and desperately bent on authorship, the double risk must be run of selection in the first place, and of execution afterwards. And in the motley tombola of matter, which invites the choice and mocks it, Chance must be the presiding deity. To that capricious goddess I entrust myself in this new literary venture. I shall draw hap-hazard from the lottery-wheel, where the blanks bear a frightful proportion to the prizes. I will take whatever subject comes readiest to hand, and make the best of it. And lo! the first ticket that turns up is—

A PROTEST AGAINST AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

“Autobiography,” “Personal Memoirs,” “The Life of So-and-So, written by Himself,” “An Apology for the Life;” in short, any publication in which an individual assumes to record the whole transactions of his own career, public, private, political, or professional, are only different titles for the same kind of work.

“Reminiscences,” “Recollections,” “Sketches,” “Memorials,” and books of that class of modified personality, are far less sweeping in their scope. They put forth no programme of a ge-

neral record of events, and may only deal with fragments of facts or isolated traits of character. It is therefore only against the wholesale assumption comprised in the word "Autobiography," and its difficult accomplishment, that this Protest is entered.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY is a word of large pretensions, generally leading to most imperfect performance. It is an ambitious word, implying a position for him who adopts it too often disproportioned to his standing in the world. It holds out the promise of candour which it neither can nor ought in all cases to fulfil. It is thus frequently in its nature a deception, or in its application an offence.

Few men are of prominence sufficient to warrant a disclosure of all they have felt or done in life, or a description of who and what they have been and are, with details of their remote relationships and minute connections. Names need not be cited of those who were entitled by their station, their achievements, and their influence to take this course, and who have done it admirably. They are the exceptions, though numerous; and the recollection of delighted readers suggesting their favourite volumes, will spare me the invidious task of selecting those I myself hold most in honour; nor do I for a moment

presume to censure any one who follows an example which in my own case I would avoid. But however charming the work, and whoever may be the writer, he and his readers do not in all cases stand quite fair towards each other. They are altogether in his power, yet he cannot in all things keep faith with them. They have, from the comprehensive nature of the title autobiographer, a right to know the secret history of transactions with which he was implicated more or less. But delicacy towards those who acted with him or to those who survive them forces a concealment, or possibly a misstatement, regarding matters which the purchaser reckoned on finding fully developed when he bought the book.

At the very best, how awkwardly placed is he who attempts the story of his own life! Not one in a hundred can really understand or sympathize with him. Broad facts may speak to the sense of the million; but very few can enter into the heart of the narrator's sentiments, which justify discrepancies of conduct that give a doubtful colouring to motives. Many affairs of deep interest to society cannot be revealed without compromising others besides the hero of his own tale. These must often, in honour, be garbled, crippled, or altogether suppressed. But again,

the temptations of egotism, vanity, or a spurious conscientiousness about telling "the truth, the whole truth," sometimes lead the fop or the sinner to make the world at large his confessional. The morbid longing for notoriety overpowers the sense of shame; a false view at times obscures what was meant to be a veritable statement, and unguarded exposures are made which blot the fair fame that ought for ever to be safe against attaint.

The writer of an autobiography is, in short, always in a false position, and the reader most frequently in an unfair one. The first can never be expected to speak "nothing but the truth." The latter draws many inferences on imperfect grounds, estimates character from insufficient data, and sees facts through a hazy atmosphere and a distorted medium.

Abounding instances exist in illustration of these strictures.

Rousseau's 'Confessions,' Ireland's Avowals of Literary Fraud, Heinrich Heine's 'Geständnisse,' and all such voluntary self-exposures, are revolting proofs of the author's want of delicate reserve, and an insolent appraisalment of his self-importance. No man, under the boast of making a clean breast, should sell his secret vileness to the public, like a deformed pauper anticipating

death, and disposing of his body to the surgeons. This is trafficking the infirmities of nature for base lucre. Decency commands the concealment of physical disease, and that which is mental should remain a mystery. God gave us our virtues for mankind, our vices for ourselves, either as a penalty for being born in original sin, or to temper the pride which would aim at perfection. Consciousness of crime is a tax upon knowledge. But it should be paid to the source from which knowledge is derived, in repentance and reformation.

What has the public to do with our undiscovered errors? What right have we to raise the veil, and inflict the painful truth on others? Why even intrude our small griefs upon the world, drops of sorrow in an ocean of woe? A decorous hypocrisy forbids a man turning informer and peaching against himself. Let others find him out if they can, and denounce him if they will. But they don't require his debasement to make them better. If they want an example, let them scrutinize themselves. Depend on it, every individual has a rich fund of faults, if not exactly of rascality, within him, and conscience will be sure to indorse the bill drawn on it by inquiry. But our fellow-creatures have no claim on any man's frankness for his own condemna-

tion, when it would most probably find clamorous echoes in nine-tenths of their hearts. Self-immolated victims do little good by the sacrifice. They gibbet themselves to amuse, not to improve, the lookers-on. They plunge into the gulf, but the city is not saved.

It is, therefore, far better that every one whose life is worthy of being written, should find a biographer in some one else. The truth has then a better chance of coming out. The work, if less piquant, may be less prejudiced. It will be probably authentic, neither an accusation nor a defence. Each man who writes of other men will form his own standard of propriety as to what he ought to say or leave unsaid. The merit of his memoir will be in proportion to the measure of his discretion. Not bound to tell all he may know, he should not distort or discolour his facts; and repudiating the axiom of speaking nothing but eulogy of the dead, he should refrain from stating anything they could refute if still alive.

For myself, in this present case, I have to carry out these maxims on a very limited scale. I am not about to attempt any one else's life, nor to take my own. I shall commit neither assassination nor suicide. I have no pretensions to justify the publication of my personal me-

moirs, nor any project of tracing those of another. I shall, however, make passing sketches of some individuals as I knew them, and mix myself up in the events I took a part in. I never sought men with the design of turning them to account. Had I done so, I might have collected a famous gallery of portraits. But though a sportsman all my life, I never was a hunter of lions. If they or lesser animals crossed my road I took a flying shot at them sometimes, but I never followed them up for the purpose of bringing them down. Not much of a naturalist, I have however caught some insects on the wing, and pinned a few of them to paper.

I have not been a great traveller, though almost all my life travelling. I have not penetrated into the extremes of the globe, the distant East, the far West, the frigid North, or frozen South. I have not approached the Pole nor crossed the Equator. But I have mixed much with men and things in scenes less remote but more populous; and shaken the dust from my shoes on many a well-worn track, from the crater of Vesuvius to the cataract of Niagara. A great deal of what I saw and knew has been long before the public in various forms of composition. Portions of the matter I am now about to print, have been written long, long ago.

A little of it has already appeared in scattered contributions to periodical works. But by far the greater part is now offered for the first time, and, such as it is, it is at least original.

CHAPTER II.

OLD AND NEW IRELAND.

IF the proper place to begin a thing is at the beginning, the starting-post (in the race of life) is the point to start from. Therefore it is that Ireland takes precedence here, for my eyes first opened on the world in that, one of its greenest spots.

Nations, or "peoples," as the phrase goes, unintentionally give themselves *sobriquets* at times. The "Emerald Isle" has passed into a gibing by-word, from the epithet being rather boastingly assumed by the natives; as "the finest peasantry" is applied to them in scorn, because repeated to satiety by a great Irish orator, and echoed *ad nauseam* by his followers, until it became laughed at. So with "les braves Belges;" and I might give other instances, but it is with Ireland I have to do at present. Now, the verdure of that island is really remarkable; so much so, that when Barry the painter first showed his landscapes in London,

the excessive greenness of his grass, copied from nature in his own country, was derisively sneered at as being unnatural. So some American representations of forest scenery are not believed in in Europe, from the exceeding brilliancy of the autumnal foliage. But those who have trod an Irish meadow, or wandered in a Virginian wood, can testify to the truth of those apparent exaggerations, in comparison with the tamer colours of a soil less moist, or of a colder climate. Let us then good-naturedly concede its title to Old Ireland, and at least let me consider it

“The greenest spot on memory’s waste.”

English tourists have of late years seen much of Irish scenery, and purchasers of property under the recent Parliamentary titles have become acquainted with such of the peasantry as have not been removed by famine or emigration. But neither tourist nor settler of these degenerate days can know anything practical of the national character, as it was exemplified in the host of remarkable public men who flourished before the consummation of the Legislative Union with Great Britain in 1800, and some of whom still lingered in faded celebrity in my youthful days. Some were distinguished in the British Parliament, others were prominent in the

struggle for Catholic Emancipation. Curiosity was alive to their peculiarities, and their reputation for eloquence and wit was European. Plunkett yet flourished in senatorial honours. O'Connell had worked his way to fame. Edmund Burke, Henry Grattan, Flood, and Curran, though their bodies were in the grave, still lived in lustrous renown. And several others, among them Charles Kendal Bushe, enjoyed a local consideration in the land of their birth, sufficient to give them a high reputation in England. But that reputation expired in most cases with them, and few of their names, except those mentioned, have survived the stirring events contemporaneous with their career. The interest which was then centred in domestic topics, has shifted to foreign affairs, leaving no chance of resurrection to the buried excitement of those troubled times. Without disparaging the generation to which I myself belong, fast making way for another and another, I may say that strangers have small notion nowadays of what Irish intellect produced of yore. And if they know little of what Ireland was in times so comparatively recent, how indifferent must they be to the far-back records of that always *emerald* isle, its Celtic name of Ierna or Juverna, softened into Erin, giving warrant for the etymology !

We need not revert to the opinion, of "the ancients," ignorant and superstitious as they were on most points of geographical science, and unenlightened as to the inhabitants of a distant island, the existence of which was considered apocryphal. The Phœnician navigators and merchants, who had pushed their enterprise as far as the Atlantic, secured their monopolies of trade by concealing the real nature of the islands of the West, which were in consequence made the scene of vague imaginings by the Greek poets, who there placed their Elysian fields and their Hesperides,—creations of fancy, foreshadowing a reality long afterwards established. It was not till the second or third centuries before the Christian era that the Greeks made voyages to the British islands, though the Phœnicians had traded to them long before. From probable, though not thoroughly authentic, testimonials there can be little doubt that though the earliest population consisted of Celts, the Phœnicians had established colonies in Ireland, and introduced their religious rites and ceremonies into the country long antecedent to the Christian era.

Had Ireland had the advantage of being subjected by Rome as Britain was, she would have been earlier known to the rest of the world in her true colours. To be conquered, but not

crushed, by an enlightened nation is the greatest blessing that can befall a savage one. But Ireland unfortunately found no Cæsar to subdue, no Agricola to colonize, no Tacitus to describe her. No Roman ever planted a hostile foot on her shores ; and she went on from century to century in isolated obscurity, with the poor consolation of certain after-claims for learning and virtue, that are at best doubtful, and too often denied if not disproved.

When Englishmen began to know something of the people who had been so long their neighbours, and of whom they at length so easily made a prey, an astonishing unanimity was expressed concerning them. Giraldus Cambrensis, in the twelfth century, bore striking and pithy testimony, in a sentence as terse and comprehensive as one of Tacitus himself, to the energy and sincerity of the Irish of his times, two of the noblest qualities in a half-savage people, "If an Irishman be a good man, there is no better ; if he be a bad man, there is no worse."

Improvement was rapid and great. J. Good, an ecclesiastic in 1566, gives his descriptive evidence as follows :—

"In general this people are robust, and remarkably nimble ; of bold and haughty spirit ; sharp-witted, lively, prodigal of life ; patient of

want, heat, and cold; of amorous complexion; hospitable to strangers, constant in their attachments, implacable in their enmities; credulous, greedy of glory, impatient of reproach and injury; they think it the highest wealth to live without work, and the greatest happiness to enjoy liberty."

The lapse of nearly three centuries has made small change in the leading traits of this admirable analysis.

Lord Bacon, in one of his powerful and sententious paragraphs, says:—

"This island is endowed with many dowries of nature, considering the fruitfulness of the soil, and especially the race and generation of men, as it is not easy to find such a confluence of commodities, *if the hand of man did but join with the hand of nature*" (Works, vol. iii. p. 321).

Edmund Spenser, the great poet, whose long residence in Ireland gave him good opportunities for knowing the country, but whose severity of feeling towards the natives, as indicated in his 'View of Ireland,' removes all suspicion of his being a too partial witness to the merits of their birth-place, writes of it in the following strain:—

"And sure Ireland is yet a most sweete and beautifull countrie as any under heaven, being stored throughout with many goodlie rivers, re-

plenished with all sorts of fish most abundantlie, sprinkled with many verie sweete islands, and goodlie lakes, little inland seas that will carry even shippes upon their waters; adorned with goodlie woods, even fit for building of shippes and houses, as that if some princes in the world had them they would soon hope to be lords of all the seas, and ere long of all the world. Also full of verie good ports and havens open upon England, as inviting us to come into them to see what excellent commodities the countrie can afford, besides the soyle itself most fertile, fit to yeeld all kind of fruit that shall be committed thereunto. And lastly the heavens, most milde and temperate, though somewhat more moist than the parts towards the east."

And Malthus, in our own days, who could scarcely have looked with a favourable eye on a population so dissentient to his peculiarly un-Irish theories, still conscientiously bears witness that "Ireland might be made a more rich and prosperous country than England is, in proportion, in consequence of its greater natural capabilities."

After having stated so much of undoubted fact, and I might multiply my English authorities, I do not think it wise to dwell on points which may not bear the same authentic stamp. But

the absence of all venomous reptiles from this island, for which God has done so much and man so little until very lately, is a feature so remarkable that it must not be silently passed by. Without contesting the claim of St. Patrick of having driven out those plagues (there being no evidence that they ever existed there), it is enough to know that English writers centuries back recorded the peculiarity. "*Nullus ibi serpens vivere valeat*," was the expression of the Venerable Bede; while Camden says, "*Nullus hic anguis nec venenatum quicquam*."

Thus hurried back for awhile by the reflux tide of thought, I must come quickly down the stream again, through historical margins to be glanced at in passing, until I reach the recollection of the small space I myself occupied in the scene.

The history of Ireland, chequered with eventful periods, and full to overflowing with stirring interest, gives the lie direct to the assertion of a grotesque and bigoted writer that she "has been in a chronic atrophy for five centuries back;" an assertion which although perpetrated in plain English—a rare accident on the part of the author—is anything but plain sense, in the teeth of the desperate activity displayed by Ireland from the invasion of Strongbow to the rebellion

of 1798, of the mighty agitation which carried Catholic Emancipation in 1829, and of the marvellous Temperance Movement, at the very period when the author was putting forth his *ex-cathedrá* crudity.

There is a tide in the affairs of nations as well as those of men. The political waters of Ireland have long had their rise and fall, tumultuous at all times, and only turbidly subsiding even now. It is not my purpose to dive into this troubled sea in search of antiquated doubts or undiscovered truths. To trace analogies between the past and present, and from them prophesy what is to be, is a task out of my design. I heard O'Connell shouting "Justice to Ireland!" I saw Father Mathew pointing out temperance to Irishmen. I knew that the country had been treated unjustly; that the people had been intemperate, the inevitable consequence of ignorance, which is, in its turn, the heaviest wrong that a government can negatively inflict. But I did not venture to predict the result of the oppression, nor of the outcry for redress. I thought, spoke, and wrote on the subject* where my voice and my pen had a certain small local influence, and met with indulgent attention; but I waited and watched

* See 'North American Review' for July, 1840, and January, 1841.

for the solution of the problem which I felt was to be worked out by Ireland herself. Her unfulfilled destiny, as a portion of European civilization, was to be completed only on her own soil and by her own sons. England had not the virtue nor the wisdom to accomplish it. This incapacity is not, however, peculiar to her. No nation has ever yet done perfect justice to another. No spontaneous spring of magnanimity has ever thrown wide the portals to an imprisoned people. A section of a population may be joined with its victors, under a promise of equal rights and a semblance of amalgamation, as was often effected by ancient Rome and by other conquering states in later times. A class may be enlarged; a part may be disburdened of local restraints; but no wholesale manumission has ever taken place from nation to nation; and England is not likely to be the first to make such a glorious bound on the career of greatness. In saying this I only specify a peculiarity of race, for England and her offshoots across the Atlantic have of all nations most broadly developed the instinct of territorial ambition. The Anglo-Saxon blood will everywhere rise to admit it, with a glow of pride rather than a blush of shame. From the earliest of her wars with France, England has been too

narrow for the English. The possession of Gascony, wrenched from her after a fearful struggle; the invasion of Ireland, where she has from the first kept firm hold; the seizure of the American continent and islands, where she has still a footing, slippery it may be, but undisputed; the overrunning of India, the grasp of which strains every nerve, the acquisition of Gibraltar, Malta, the Ionian Isles, the Cape of Good Hope, and the colonization of Australia, New Zealand, and China at last, are points enough on which to rest. This enumeration sufficiently establishes that the pride of colonial conquest is the absorbing appetite of the English mind, a passion without bounds, the sustaining excitement of a whole nation—rather parodied than paralleled by what was till the other day the United States of America.

Was it then to be for a moment imagined that England would voluntarily concede to Ireland the “Justice” clamoured for by O’Connell, and which meant nothing less than the dismemberment of the British Empire? The standard of Repeal of the Union which he openly hoisted was really the banner of independence, under the pretext of a compromise. How could it be believed that England would consent to that *premier pas*, which was sure to cost so ruinous a

price. But even supposing it to have been but a concession to popular exigence, when did England ever grant so great a boon, of herself, and really *in good time*? Let her domestic history answer the question. Let American Independence and Catholic Emancipation, and Parliamentary Reform stand forth in evidence. When necessity forces a great measure from British power, it is always yielded *greatly*. There is no half-opening of the hitherto closed hand, no faltering, no fear of misrepresentation, no care for the opinion of others, no doubt of her own judgment. The Peace of 1783 with the United States, the Pacification of Europe in 1814, the Catholic Relief Bill in 1829, the Reform Bill in 1830, the Repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846, are a few out of many monuments of the largest political sagacity. Whenever other nations or her own subjects act for their own interests with courage and industry, England has always shown in the long run, her appreciation of those two main qualities in her own character. Sympathy with them will obtain fully what justice or policy may fail to obtain at all. England above all nations knows how to yield with dignity, and to give with grandeur. And whenever Ireland puts forward a just and rational claim, in a spirit worthy of British admiration and esteem, it will sooner or later force its concession.

The greatest good that England could grant to Ireland, modifying a mass of misrule, was the advantage of her example. The national union for all national objects, the merging of party feeling in the common cause; this, the great secret of a people's power, England has been involuntarily teaching Ireland for centuries; and it is to be hoped that Ireland has got the lesson by heart. She has been long reading in the volumes of experience. Her wild struggles for relief were preparatory steps for the quiet course she seems now to have entered on. Her furtive glances at an impracticable freedom have taught her to bear the light of rational liberty.

Casting back our looks upon Ireland as she was in 1782, when Henry Grattan raised the nation, by the impassioned logic of his eloquence, into an attitude of independence; again at the formation of the Society of United Irishmen, in 1791; and finally at the fierce outburst of rebellion in 1798, we can trace step by step, the gradations by which the country, in her own despite, and unknown to herself, was reaching the measure of Legislative Union, by which she was in 1800 entirely engulfed. The patriotic declarations of those various epochs and those of still later days bear a complete similarity of tone. They are in fact but links in the same

chain of public wants and wishes ; the utterance of the same hopes, by different generations of men, for the common object of nationality.

But. nothing can be more opposed than the circumstances of the times, and the habits of the people. When Grattan aroused an ardent population to arm for a loyal insurrection, more than four-fifths of that population were in a state of political thralldom and national debauchery. When Wolfe Tone founded the Society of United Irishmen, the whole country was disjointed, and all the eloquent appeals of that combination of patriotism and talent were but so many acts of alliance with the policy of England, carried out by its Irish creatures, for that catastrophe of revolt which placed the country bound hand and foot at the mercy of its conqueror. England had thus found means to cajole and disarm the volunteers, and by goading the Catholics into premature rebellion, turned the weapons of the patriot Protestants into instruments for crushing the people, and preparing the Parliament for the corruption under which it voted the Union, the basest of political crimes, as the partition of Poland had been the boldest. Irish independence was trampled in the dust, and England gained a vile triumph, at a purchase far dearer than the proudest victory was worth.

The Union, so effected, and followed up with vindictive energy, was long a total failure for all the purposes of national amalgamation. English ministers bore down the rhetoric of Irish members, by the weight of figures and of calculation, to show that the Union had proved for Ireland the blessing which Pitt in his pamphlet, in 1799, and Clare and Castlereagh, in their speeches at the same epoch, promised that it should become. But it is not by arithmetic that popular sentiment can be smothered. To make the Union a reality, the whole system of government in Ireland required a change. Men are always found to work out the destinies of nations. The necessity of a case is sure to generate the instruments for its completion. The ministers who have governed Ireland of late years have been sensible of the duties of their mission, have laboured to surmount its difficulties, and have taught the country to co-operate in its own salvation. They sagaciously discovered, honestly admitted, and boldly strove to extirpate the evils which previous administrations either saw not, denied, or cherished. Under their protection a noble self-confidence has sprung up among the people, more effective for purposes of good than all the efforts of demagogues and the deceptions of factions were for mischief.

Proud in their recovered rights, the millions of Ireland were ripe for regeneration. Peaceful political agitation with social reform led to the decrease of crime, put fighting out of fashion and whiskey out of favour, closed the distilleries for want of custom, and left the gaols open for want of criminals. Those who would hold the Irish people down in ignorance and debauchery were appalled as the good work went on. Those who take pride in the advancement of the human race, who though incredulous of perfection rejoice at improvement, may now turn towards Ireland with admiration, still mixed with solicitude. For fanaticism is still alive—will it ever be extinct? Prejudice is yet flourishing—can it ever be rooted up?

Many utopian plans were frequently put forward by well-intentioned speakers and writers, among the latter M. Gustave de Beaumont,* while Ireland was morally besotted, and before the discovery of the great secret of redress. O'Connell had produced, it is true, that extraordinary political organization which carried emancipation. But TEMPERANCE, the foundation on which everything good is to be built, was not preached or dreamt of as practicable beyond

* 'L'Irlande Sociale, Politique et Religieuse.' Par Gustave de Beaumont. Paris, 1839; 2 tomes, 8vo.

mere local or passing occasion, or as a concomitant branch of a rational but commonplace code of morals. It soon became known, felt, and sworn to by millions, as the master key to the difficult problem of social regeneration. The inspiration fell on those millions through the agency of one man; and Father Mathew stood alone on the pedestal of his fame, in a holier ordination than that which priested him;—not as a mere follower of Grattan, or coadjutor of O'Connell; not as a rival of the dignified patriotism of the former, or the fiery perseverance of the latter; but as the equal in influence of those great men, and forming with them a triple combination, not unaptly figured out by the verdure, brightness, and equality of the three-leaved shamrock, Ireland's emblem. It is hard to adjudge the palm to either of the members in this national Trinity. Grattan awoke in the hearts of bondmen the love of liberty. O'Connell taught them how to become free. Mathew laboured to make them worthy of freedom. Grattan armed eighty thousand citizens, and won Ireland's commercial and parliamentary independence by physical force. O'Connell enfranchised hundreds of thousands by claims of constitutional right. Mathew disenthralled millions from the tyranny of self-debasement, by the

power of moral suasion. Grattan acted on the passions, O'Connell on the judgment, Mathew on the consciences of men ; each being admirably fitted to the times in which his efforts came into play, and to the state of social feeling on which it was to act. Each laboured well in his vocation. The result of their combined mission must depend on others. To them, however, who planned the design of national creation, from a chaos of political turbulence and social degradation, the highest place must be assigned in the gratitude of those whom they prepared to become a PEOPLE.

Happily the agitation of twenty or thirty years ago, has totally subsided ; for peaceful as it was, it was yet pernicious. The actors in it are fast disappearing from the scene, by the varied agencies of life and death, and the extinction of the unwholesome heats which warmed them into notoriety. There is now no atmosphere in which such men may thrive. The age of misrule and the causes of turbulence have passed away. England and Ireland are grown wiser than they were, from a better knowledge of their respective characters and mutual interests. The Irish are awakening to a sense of their own mistakes, and the conviction that they were the cause of much of England's misconduct.

The national character of Ireland was long obscured, from the effect of its own exaggerated travesties. Brave and generous as Irishmen are admitted to be, they laboured to gain a reputation for reckless pugnacity and unprincipled profuseness. The national songs written by their native bards gave a popular version of their characteristics which naturally superinduced contempt. The sober English could not hold in great respect a people who habitually depicted themselves in an aspect at once grotesque and disreputable. The man—

“Who spends half-a-crown out of sixpence a day,”

or who

“Goes into a tent to spend half-a-crown,
Comes out, meets his friend, and for love knocks
him down,”

is at best but a loose and dangerous person, whose jocular absurdities raise a laugh, but whose society and whose “friendship” we would shun.

Yet such was the standard a majority of the Irish established for themselves, not merely in doggerel verse but in absolute fact, and they felt a poor pride in acting down to the degrading level of spendthriftism and bullying. To get into debt and difficulty, and either fight or wriggle

their way out of it, was the general rule, and those who formed the exceptions, numerous as they were, were looked on as shabby defaulters. He who abhorred duelling, disliked hard drinking, or avoided prodigal expense, was branded as a poltroon, a pippin-squeezer, a skin-flint, or by some such expressive though inelegant epithets, and it required great firmness to brave the contumely they conveyed.

The result was wide-spread over all society. Extravagance and exaggeration in living and speaking, law-suits, battles with bailiffs, single combats with pistols, faction fighting with shile-laghs, wine, whiskey, gambling ; the gaol for the gentleman and the gallows for the peasant ; such was the combination that gave Ireland its lamentable pre-eminence. It is true that many of the best attributes of the national character flourished amidst this chaos. The wilderness abounded with flowers, though they were choked with weeds. Courage and hospitality were mixed up with the excesses that overlaid them ; and all—virtues, vices, talents, crimes, formed a tangled mass of contradictions which bad government made it impossible to unravel.

The most fatal period of a social system is when there is no strictly defined boundary between right and wrong ; when looseness of prin-

ciple leads to licence in practice; when faults are slurred over as mere *faux pas*; errors in conduct as amiable weakness; profusion as fashionable folly; and crime itself as misdirected energy.

In condemning this as the prevalent state of Irish society even into the earlier part of the present century, I am not assuming any too rigid code of morals as applicable to the practices of modern civilization. Whoever reads humanity rightly, knows its imperfection, and admits that evil must abound in all large communities, or the system itself would not be human. The "small vices," to use Talleyrand's phrase, are inseparable from man's organization; but they become as bad as the large ones when the line of demarcation is not evident. A highly cultivated state of society, under a court and an aristocracy, regulates the conduct of the people at large, on such reasonable grounds of delicacy and reserve, that propriety becomes an instinct of the well-bred, and from them it passes in irresistible gradation to the least refined. If debauchery is held to be immoral, it must be kept out of sight. If ignorance is considered vulgar, men will seek knowledge or assume it. If prodigality is stamped as dishonest, they will live within their means; and thus the world is saved from the

display of evils, the worst danger of which is the infection of their example.

Such is and has long been the social state of England, France, and other European countries, with modifications based on varieties in climate and institutions. But in Ireland the Viceregal Court was too often dissipated and sometimes profligate. The Government was a market of corruption. Men were openly bought and bribed. The aristocracy were spendthrifts and of course harsh landlords. Education was on *principle* withheld from the poor, lest with knowledge they might gain the power with which it is said to be synonymous. Low and mean devices followed in the wake of embarrassed circumstances. Subterfuges and expedients were the characteristics of the gentry. Drunkenness and dishonesty were those of the common people.

I avoid discussing s  ctarian rivalries and the outrages springing from them. Religious abuses, theological controversy, intolerance, and persecution have formed the compound curse of Ireland for many a generation. But the evils I have traced were irrespective of the perversions of Christianity from its source. All sects were alike obnoxious to a sweeping reproach damaging to the Irish nation at large.

It was natural that all beyond the pale of such a state of things should look upon such a country and such a people with contempt. The opinions of England took the colour of its prejudices, and Ireland became, in logical sequence, a bye-word of scorn.

The Irish people were shrewd enough to comprehend their ignominious position. They writhed under it, and paid it back by hatred of England, and this dominant feeling was pushed to excess by *soi-disant* patriots. Catholic Emancipation being conceded, not by the magnanimity but by the fears of British statesmen, the unquiet mind of O'Connell not satisfied to rest on that splendid triumph, started anew on a headlong chace after the *ignis fatuus* of RE-PEAL, unattainable but by the destruction of English power and at the price of Ireland's ruin.

The struggle of years ended in the total failure of O'Connell's giant efforts, and was quickly followed by his broken health, his voluntary exile, and his death in a foreign land. With his fall the fabric of political combination raised by his genius lost all cohesive force, and its incongruous elements came crashing down. From that day all chance of maintaining what was called the Irish party was at an end. Vain efforts have been made by the imitators of O'Connell's sys-

tem to keep up agitation ; and those former adherents who even before his death denounced this system as too tame, driven in despair to attempted insurrection were shattered by the storm they raised.

Succeeding this catastrophe came the fearful visitation of the potato-disease and its inevitable consequences, famine, and that amazing rush of emigration aptly designated as the Irish *Exodus*, for it required a term of wholesale application to figure the extent of this movement. A decrease within two years of one-third of the population startled the world at large as an unparalleled event in the history of a people ; but it awoke the rest of the Irish nation to the truth of the country's position and prospects. The so-called Irish party, after a few spasmodic struggles, left the field for national redemption free to the efforts of Irish industry and British wisdom.

And everything is propitious for the gathering in of the great harvest. A change almost incredible has taken place in the national character of Ireland. Since John Bull has ceased to play the tyrant, Paddy no longer acts the buffoon. The despot sovereign and the court fool are both extinct. The Irish no more excite laughter by their antics, nor abhorrence by domestic tragedies. The love of liquor has lost its former in-

ordinate force. Duelling is extinct, faction fights are unheard of, assassination is almost unknown. The temperance of the gentry, the comparative sobriety of the lower orders, the decrease of street and highway beggary, complete the picture to those visiting Ireland for pleasure ; and it strikes with delighted surprise the absentees who have known the country long ago, and return to it after a forced or voluntary desertion.

No less astonishing is the alteration in the feelings of the rest of the empire in favour of the integral part in question. England acknowledges the propriety which has replaced the proverbial indiscretion of the sister island. She has given up the paltry jealousy which so long disgraced her and thwarted Ireland. The mockery heretofore applied to the "Emerald Isle," is changed into an acknowledgment of its improvement. Irishmen meet with no obstacles towards advancement in England, which offers manifold resources to their talent. Places under Government are freely given to them in fair proportions. They abound in the learned and military professions. The colonies offer them homes of independence and comfort. No difference in fact exists but what arises from perverse and factious dispositions. With laws for all alike and advantages in common, the grand desideratum is in

rapid progress of realization, the UNION must be soon complete.

But the enduring stability of the work depends on the Imperial Government and Parliament. The immediate causes of Ireland's growing prosperity are too obvious to require discussion. But two of them, which may be called indirect and apparently disastrous, the famine and the vast emigration, have reduced the population to a number far too small in quantity for the productive capabilities of the country, and assuredly not enough in quality for its total regeneration. Yet perhaps a million or more might be still spared with advantage to the self-expatriated and to the land they would leave behind them. As long as the numerical force of an ignorant and inflammable race justifies in the remnant of enthusiastic agitators a hope of physical resistance to England, Ireland will have no chance of repose. It is the bounden duty as well as the best policy of the Government to encourage English, Scotch, and Welsh settlers in those depopulated tracts in which quadrupeds are almost the only "things of life," and to induce the investment of capital in manufacturing and commercial undertakings. Agriculturists, merchants, and fabricants will soon discover the best localities for industrial pursuits, and then let the Government

set boldly and heartily to work. Let it stand neutral between religious feuds and party bias. Let elections be untampered with, electors unbribed, and candidates unbought. Let education be extended and if needs be enforced. And above all things let emigration be allowed to run its natural course. There is no fear of its going too fast or too far. Let no heed be given to the objection that "it is the best who go and the bad who remain." It is in truth the dissatisfied who make place for the well-disposed. But in any case the bad will become the better and the better best, when a restricted number has a fair field and an abundance of favour, in the form of increased wages, sufficient food, extended knowledge, friendly intercourse with settlers from Great Britain, and the certain results of an improved civilization. Then it will be seen what Irishmen can do and what Ireland may become. Up to this time it has not been able to prove its capability. When its native princes and aboriginal serfs were vanquished, but the country not totally absorbed, its title as a separate kingdom perpetuated in the person of a foreign monarch, with the mockery of independence and the fact of subjugation, it was but a colony, of too close neighbourhood with the parent State, where oppression and confis-

cation had full scope, but where man's powers were undeveloped, and the best gifts of nature neglected or altogether overlooked.

The chief danger at this most propitious time for consummating the great good so near at hand, is that the complexity of foreign alliances may cause an apathetic inattention to home interests. The tranquillity of Ireland may be suffered to subside into stagnation. The paralyzing proverb of "letting well alone" may become the guiding axiom of men in power, and the country may possibly relapse into its former diseased condition. Having got rid of a swarming and unmanageable population, statesmen may be too timid or too lazy for the task which so many of their predecessors shrank from. If aroused to a sense of their responsibility, they would not perhaps dally with time. They might see that in this age of national reconciliation, while France and England have joined hands, England and Ireland should embrace. They are at least of one family now, for in every province of either country many of the other may find their kith and kin. Saxon and Celt have after all a common interest, the enduring pledge for a solid connection. The one has wrongs to forgive, the other provocations to forget. The most powerful should be the most magnanimous, and the strong

should set an example to the weak. A dignified forbearance from all assumption of superiority should be adopted by England, and all the wicked verbiage of Irish rancour cease. An instinct of reason is teaching Ireland the great truth that the saving remedy for her ills is a thorough amalgamation with Great Britain, and that the time has arrived for the removal of "England's difficulty" and the realizing of "Ireland's opportunity."

Reverting to my own personal experience of the subject thus sketched, I think the principal feature of my early days was the marked separation of religious sects in society, that chronic evil which was the source of many an acute mischief. I well remember when, with few exceptions, Roman Catholics were not seen in fashionable company, even in "the midland counties," removed from the rabid Orangism of the North. The bitterness of private feeling tainting all public affairs may be easily imagined, under a system which limited the intercourse between men, equals in family, fortune, and education, to the hunting-field, the assize balls, or occasional public dinners. In those days anniversaries were kept merely to keep up animosities. Orange emblems or green ribbons were worn in party spite. Toasts were given and songs sung in dis-

cordant tones, moral or musical. The milk of human kindness was mixed with vinegar, and turned to curds. All the best national traits were denaturalized, and the worst were paramount. Dissipation was always the order of the day—and night. Hard drinking was the rule, sobriety the exception. I have seen the door of a dining-room locked and the key thrown out of the window, to prevent the escape of any moderate man who did not choose to risk an exit by that same way. I have seen men fined bumpers of salt-and-water—and drinking them—for the offence of mixing water with their claret. How many a time did half, or more, of those “choice spirits,” come staggering up to the drawing-room, scarcely able to stand straight or speak plainly, when the chief measure of fame was the quantity of wine the hero could manage to swallow, and an individual was publicly known as a two-bottle, or a three-bottle, or a six-bottle-man.

Then the duelling! How regularly was a carouse, an election, a race-course dispute, a ball-room altercation, a tavern broil, followed by a fight! How many gallant youths and full-grown men have I known who were killed or maimed in single combat! These are really sad scenes to look back at in cold blood; but—may I confess

it?—how exciting and contagious when they were actual living facts!

I could tell many stirring and perhaps amusing anecdotes of those times, were I quite sure of my readers' sympathy. But I do not like to risk the record of obscure provincial *escapades* of actors who merited at best but a second or third rate notoriety. School adventures are hackneyed subjects. A barring-out is scarcely worth describing, when the obnoxious pedagogue's grandchildren might be among the readers; and accounts of fox-hunting or other field sports have small chance of interest for a third generation, who only see stray specimens of one's former comrades, as gouty old gentlemen on crutches, or wrapped up in flannel.

"Oh, breathe not their names; let them rest in the shade."

Yet many of them were gay young fellows in their day—and mine; and some of them have cut a figure beyond our early restrained locality in the professions and in Parliament. Had I followed up a home career, I might have been able to signalize some who have gained a wider reputation as among my early associates. But causes of no consequence to the world I now write for, doomed me to a less learned course than theirs, and threw me early into one which held great

attractions for youths who had more sail than ballast urging their life-boat on its stormy voyage. The whole heart of Europe at that time beat with military ardour. Every lad of any spirit "who had heard of battles," like young Norval, and whose "voice was still for war," like that of Sempronius (I hope the tragedies of "Douglas" and "Cato" are not out of print or of date), took all opportunities of pushing his claim for a commission, by purchasing or volunteering into the Line, or by joining the Militia, from which he might carry sufficient men to entitle him to an ensigncy in a marching regiment. This last was the course I chose, in preference to plodding at a learned profession, or filling some place in a Government office, suited to the younger son of a younger son, with little fortune and small political interest.

My family had furnished members to Law, Physic, and Divinity, and several to the Army. I had a shadowy recollection of an uncle, a captain of foot, who fought in the American war, in a bad cause although it was called "his country's." A relative of my father's was a colonel in the East Indies. I had cousins in the Line and the Militia. A step-brother and my own brother were also in the service—and I was only anxious to add another of our name to the list. This

was soon accomplished, and ere long I was a Lieutenant of Militia. And blithe and joyous was the life of a militia-man in those days. Garrison towns, camps, and country quarters in England, Ireland, and Scotland, taken in turn, or in companionship with Regulars, which being at least half composed of draughts from *us*, left really little difference between the two branches, except the one being liable to be ordered on foreign service and the other going to it voluntarily. The Militia was then, and for many years, a permanent force, admirably disciplined, and well officered; with only the fault of being somewhat too expensive for men of moderate means (of whom I was one), leading to temptations difficult to avoid, and to debts very hard to be paid. But these were only drawbacks. The advantages overpowered them—the variety, the changes of scene, the good society, the good fellowship, and the knowledge of life.

I was always fond of getting to out-quarters with a subaltern's detachment, where I was my own master, able to pursue field sports, to avoid drill, courts-martial, and the *tracasseries* of parades and field-days. Many were the delightful acquaintanceships and intimate connections formed in those independent commands. How rich at this moment is the recollection of some of them,—how sad the memory of others!

Let me recall something characteristic of the times, in which mere personal feeling does not overpower or neutralize general facts, and, if possible, some facts out of the dead level of social enjoyments, that may carry a moral with them, while exemplifying the varieties of Home Service.

CHAPTER III.

SCENES OF HOME SERVICE.

NO. I.—A NIGHT SKIRMISH.—AN EXECUTION.

THE rough work of detachment duty in Ireland in those days was infinitely rougher than it can be now, when the military police are employed to do much that was then performed by the King's troops. Still-hunting, an ignoble pursuit, in which a subaltern of the Line or Militia was pretty much under the control of the gauger who led the party on the scent of the "mountain dew;" or domiciliary visits to suspected cabins for concealed arms or outlawed offenders, were operations of intense annoyance to the officers employed, and often attended with most unpleasant consequences. After a night foray, at all seasons and in any weather, to fall in with an illicit tubful of whiskey, cunningly concealed in the heath or furze of a hillside, to scatter the "potteen," so called from the iron pot in which primitive utensil the liquor was manufactured;

to seize the poor devils who worked so hard at their illegal trade, and who felt no ways criminal in cheating the excise, were not very exciting exploits. But it was worse to be hurried off, on the track of some base informer, to scour the neighbourhood, and force one's way into the peasant's quiet home, rummaging every nook for an imaginary gun or pistol, and in default of the expected weapons to hurry off to gaol some probably innocent fellow, old or young, followed for miles by the screams, the yells, the curses of indignant women, and scowled at by the muttering men who thronged the roadside to gaze on their handcuffed neighbours, and vow vengeance on the captors.

It was my lot to be at times mixed up in such scenes, which being in the course of one's duty, and not without excitement, drew forth no murmur, nor any attempt to evade them. On several occasions there were serious affrays with the armed factions of Shanavests and Carawats, so called in honour of the peculiar vest or cravat, their relative emblems. Shots were exchanged, wounds given and received, and a few lives lost. The southern counties of Tipperary and Waterford were the most disturbed, and the detachments scattered through those wild districts were on the alert night and day. The magistrates no

doubt did great mischief in their local jurisdictions by fomenting quarrels, and leaning with heavy hand on ignorant and semi-civilized offenders. One of those justices,—I cannot call him of the peace,—a pugnacious parson, whose saddle was more the seat of his real vocation than the pulpit, who carried pistols in his holsters and pockets, and was never so happy as when riding hard into a riotous crowd and joining in the *mé-lée*, under the pretext of quelling the disturbance, was my near neighbour, and a perpetual blister on myself and my little force of thirty men. He rarely gave us a night's rest, and was in the habit of coming or sending at all hours to the isolated house we occupied as a temporary barrack, in one of the valleys at the foot of the Waterford mountains, and close to the river Suir. The alarms were sometimes well-founded, more frequently false; but it was my duty to attend to them, and be ready to aid the civil power whenever required to do so, bearing myself the honorary rank of special constable, to enable me to act on emergencies without the presence of a magistrate.

One fine moonlight winter's night I was disturbed about ten o'clock, while reading at my cheerful turf fire, by the sounds of a carriage close to the barrack, and a hasty announcement by my servant that "his riverence was below in the

greatest possible hurry, and wishing much to spake with my Honour."

I hastened downstairs, and found my visitor in a post-chaise, which literally bristled with blunderbusses from every window, side and front; the delighted visage of the Reverend Nick (Old Nick he was familiarly called), glaring out, rubicund and smiling, between the barrels of the wide-mouthed weapons. A fierce-looking attendant, who seemed, like the firearms, loaded to the very muzzle, reclined in a corner of the post-chaise, and a servant accustomed to his master's ways sat beside the post-boy outside, with a double-barrelled pistol cocked in his hand, ready to do instant execution on his companion in case of treachery—or suspicion of the same.

The parson whispered to me that he was going in great speed to a farmhouse about three miles down the river, which, according to special information just received, was to be attacked about midnight by "a band of fierce barbarians from the hills," who were to be reinforced by a gang from the Kilkenny side of the Suir, and he requested me to go with a few of my men, to lie in wait for them, at the mouth of a certain creek where they were to land, close to the farmhouse in question; so that with me and my party

outside and the well-prepared domestic garrison within, the marauders would be sure to get a warm reception, and might be altogether frustrated in the object of their intended attack, the capture of several muskets and fowling-pieces which were known to be in the possession of the farmer and his family.

I was in good time *en route* for the designated rendezvous, with six or seven of the smartest men of my detachment,—Corporal Collins, Patrick Heeny, William Craig, Denis Doolan, all crack shots, and well experienced poachers no doubt—the names of the others I forget. They all wore their dark-grey coats and forage caps, I a close shooting-jacket and casquette to match. I had my pistols in a black waistbelt as usual, and my doubled-barrelled gun, a ball in the right and a charge of duck-shot in the left, for I had one eye to duty and the other to sport, if they were not synonymous terms on such wild service.

“Will I load the musket, with ball or shot, Liftinent?” said William Craig, as I mustered my little band in the barrack-yard before starting.

“With shot, to be sure,” answered I, to this my real right-hand man for all sort of sporting sprees, larks, or expeditions. He had of all I ever knew, the keenest eye for a hare in her form, a deer in the fern of the Curraghmore

hills, or a wild duck in the weeds or on the wing; and it was to be prepared for the latter, in case we missed the Shanavests, that I made him put the shot into his single barrel as I had done into one of my own. The rest of the men loaded with ball cartridge before we set out, to avoid the noise of ramming down, should we come within ear-shot of the enemy, for we had no breech loaders then.

The moon had gone down and a few stars twinkled dimly as we stole along in the shade by the river's bank, in a heavy marsh, wading ankle deep, and taking care that no splash should be heard to betray us. But the quick instinct of mere animal nature was always on the watch. We had gone but a little way when a dark object bounced from under my feet, a hare which had slept with eyes open of course, and away it dashed at full speed. My gun was in an instant at my shoulder as if it too had instinctively sprung up. But I checked its impulse—or my own—and brought it down again. Craig, who was beside me, silently and approvingly nodded his head. A moment after a couple of ducks, disturbed by the bounding hare, darted from the sedge, flapping their noisy wings. Craig's musket, like my gun, was instantly up with a jerk, which he as instantly controlled—and I returned

his nod by another, as much as to say "All right!" But I found it prudent to avoid the marsh and keep close to the river's side till we gained the mouth of the creek; and pointing to a willow copse which bathed its weeping branches in the stream, the men followed my movement into its concealment, and there we quietly stood nearly up to our knees in water and safe from observation as we thought.

We had not long to wait. The clock of the village church struck twelve. "Steady, men!" whispered I, as I perceived nearly at the opposite side of the river a dim, shadow-like movement coming towards us, as though some ghost had risen from the water at the midnight summons, and floated over the surface where mayhap a murdered body had been plunged. But the shadow grew quickly into a dark substance, and the regular splash of oars was heard, while the prow of the boat they impelled was gently cutting through the stream directly towards us at about fifty yards' distance.

I cocked the right-hand lock of my gun. The sound acted as a word of command, and every musket except Craig's gave an answering click. Slight as was the noise it struck upon the wary and accustomed ears of those with whom the boat was filled.

"Howld your oars, boys!" cried a voice which was instantly obeyed by the rowers. The boat stopped its forward motion, and its broadside was turned towards us by the current.

"By the powers, there's the army.* Give it to the red-backed rascals, for'by they're wrapped in their grey coats. Fire away into the copse!" exclaimed the same voice, and a loud yell from several others was accompanied by a sharp volley. Bullets and slugs whistled in the branches, and ruffled the water we stood in.

"Steady, no hurry," said I aloud, as I observed Doolan, a little on my left, to drop his musket and raise with his left arm the right which had been hit by a shot. I levelled my gun at the boat. The crew in her had all dropped down below the gunwale like sharpshooters in a bush. I fired, and the report was answered by the dead twang of the bullet through the woodwork.

"Now, men!" exclaimed I, and all except Craig and Doolan let fly. One or two shots struck the water. The rest went right into the boat's side. Not a word, not a groan was heard in reply. All was silent, as awfully so as though the whole crew had been killed outright. We

* The Irish peasantry technically call the smallest detachment of soldiers "the army."

reloaded, cocked, and stood ready for the rising up of the gang and another expected volley. But it came not, and no one was visible. The boat, no oar put out to guide it, drifted rapidly and was soon out of sight. We followed as close to the riverside as the thick mud and the tangled branches allowed, Craig standing by his wounded comrade, until reaching the creek our advance was interrupted; and I paused on hearing from the hills close above the farmhouse we were bound to, several scattered shots, answered from below, as though the attack was made, and the domestic garrison promptly replying to it.

Turning up a narrow lane leading from the creek to the main road, at a smart trot (double quick time), we were after some minutes met by a man on horseback galloping furiously, and had we not opened out to the right and left, he would have ridden some of us down in the darkness. One or two of the men raised their firelocks and would have fired at him, had he not suddenly pulled up and wheeled round, with a loud and not very pious ejaculation, flourishing a huge cavalry pistol which he carried in his right hand. Every one recognized Parson Nick, who hurriedly explained that "having no chance of a fight with the runaway scoundrels who scampered

up the hills at the first shots, and attracted by our firing at the river's side, he galloped down to have a share in it."

A few words of consultation on both sides convinced the pugnacious parson and myself that the business was over for that night, and our expedition not being crowned with many laurels, we had nothing to do but to return to my quarters *re infectá*, and carry off our wounded man.

As we trudged along the miry path across the "bottom," as the marshy ground is called, many snipe and an occasional duck sprang up and went off in the dark, screaming or quacking in their peculiar tones. Craig, relieved by two of the men from his care-taking of Doolan, asked me if he might shoot at the next which rose?

"Yes, if you can see him," answered I, not unwilling that Parson Nick should have a specimen of my henchman's skill. And at the word three or four of these wild denizens of the bog flapped their wings close to us as they rushed up into the gloom. Craig fired promptly with his clumsy musket at the right-hand bird, which came fluttering down dead within five-and-twenty yards. I, not so quick, levelled my light gun at the left-hand fugitive scarce visible to me, and missed him clean.

"'There ! he's down—I saw him give the death-twist," exclaimed the blarneying Corporal Collins.

"By my sowl, your Honour gave it to him—he'll never ait again," cried Pat Heeny, with echoing soft sawder, "Will I run an' pick him up, Liftinent?"

"No, no, it's not worth while; let him lie there—keep close—forward, men!" answered I, stepping briskly on, with my companion of the Church militant (who had dismounted and given his horse to be led by one of the men), both of us laughing heartily at the double specimen of national flattery, which amiably likes to tickle men's *amour-propre* and (they say) women's weakness—sometimes.

We were soon in the barracks, Parson Nick and I warming ourselves at the cheerful blaze of the turf fire, accomplishing internal counter-irritation through the medium of two tumblers of whiskey-punch. The men took care of their own comforts. Doolan was put to bed, the village doctor roused up from his, to dress and bandage the not very severe wound. The parson's carriage and its cargo of blunderbusses, which had followed us, took him off to his home, and we all slept soundly on the adventure.

In the course of the following day I had a letter from Parson Nick to say that a boat had

been found hauled up on shore at the Kilkenny side of the river, a couple of miles below the scene of our skirmish, with three or four bullet-holes in it and some stains of blood inside; "but," he added, "nothing was to be heard of the miscreant marauders *by land or water*, though they were not among the travellers for whose safety I had prayed last Sunday."

Five or six weeks passed over in the usual country-quarters' way and I thought no more of the affair, several others of a similar nature having succeeded it, when I one day read in the county paper of the trial and condemnation of two men for stealing arms at night, by the Special Commission sent down to relieve the crowded jails—a common occurrence in those troubled times—and that one of them had scarcely recovered from a gunshot wound, which he was supposed to have received some weeks previously, in an encounter on the river with a detachment of military from the station where I commanded.

This excited in me some interest, and in Parson Nick considerable curiosity. He was soon with me to talk the matter over, and to satisfy himself upon it he rode across the country the same day to the county town eight or nine miles off, where the prisoners were confined. On his return in the evening he paid me a passing visit, to report

progress and to take a "corroborating" tumbler, as old Burton would have called it, had he known anything of whiskey, or of its being a specific against (Irish) melancholy.

Parson Nick had seen the condemned men, and received an admission from the mouth of the wounded one that it was quite true that he had got his hurt on the occasion above related.

"What sort of man is he?" asked I.

"Oh, like all the rest of those ruffian Shnavests—a cut-throat-looking scoundrel no doubt—but I didn't much mind his looks, only he was very pale and cadaverous."

"About what age?"

"Quite a boy, about your own age—only taller, and he walked rather lame across the cell."

With this characteristic answer from my clerical friend I was content. He left me, and I was rather glad to get rid of him. But I could not get rid so easily of the fancied image of the poor wounded young fellow in his dreary cell, under sentence of death, pale from suffering, and lame from the hurt that very possibly my own hand had inflicted. I had run all this hurriedly over in my mind for a few minutes, when Parson Nick came back suddenly into my room.

"Oh, I forgot to tell you," said he, "they are to be hanged on Ballymullion Hill, close to where

they took the two fowling-pieces, on Friday week. Good-night !”

Echo might have answered Good-night, but I did not. I received a shock worse than one of ordinary electricity. Good-night ! stuck in my throat.

“ Will it be possible to save him ?” asked I of myself. Neither echo, nor reason, nor hope gave me any reply. I went to bed, but slept little and uneasily that night.

I will not worry my readers, nor revive my own disappointment and regret, by going so far back over the ground of my vain attempts to get some commutation of the sentence, or even the poor compensation of a reprieve—that straw that hanging men will catch at, but which in those days was scarcely ever followed by pardon. The rope was figuratively round their neck from the moment the judge put on his hideous black cap and passed the too prophetic sentence. Therefore I say hanging men, in contradistinction to drowning men, and with the same feeling that made Keats speak of “ their murdered man,” though he was still riding in confident life and vigour by the side of his soon-to-be assassins.

No, there was no hope for the youthful burglar and incipient rebel. He had broken into a house with a gang and carried off sundry weapons for

levying war against the King's majesty. So said the indictment.

"But he committed no act of personal violence—he took no money."

"No matter, he took fire-arms to be used on occasion against the Government."

"But his former character—"

"Was bad, very bad; at least we are told so by the committing magistrate."

"Then the severe punishment he has already had—his wound—he may be lamed for life."

"That is not a serious consideration; he is to be hanged on Friday."

"But his youth—he is only seventeen."

"I don't care if he were seventy—excuse my being peremptory—an example must be made. We cannot listen to sentiment when duty is calling us. It is impossible. Say no more on the subject."

I gave the thing up hopelessly. The man was doomed. He was born no doubt under a falling star, or during an eclipse.

Two days preceding the Friday fixed for the performance of the tragedy I received a letter from the stipendiary magistrate of the district, requiring me to attend, with as many men of my detachment as I considered it prudent to put on the duty, at Ballymullion Hill at ten o'clock

on the fatal morning, to join other parties from sundry of our outposts and troops from the neighbouring towns.

This unlooked-for summons startled and greatly disturbed me. I wrote in reply, what was, I admit, a very unjustifiable and refractory note, that I did not consider myself bound to attend with the men of my party on such an occasion, without direct orders from the commanding officer at head-quarters.

Late in the evening my busy and indefatigable friend the parson came to me to remonstrate on the step I had taken, and to warn me that the stipendiary official, greatly offended, had forwarded my note to head-quarters. I expected as much, but I refused to retract or apologize, as old Nick strongly urged me to do, for I never was fond of beating a retreat ; and I had hopes I might be borne out in my view of the case by the influence of the Adjutant, a great friend of mine, and so avoid the duty which was so odious and repugnant to me. But on the Thursday evening an orderly brought me peremptory instructions to hold myself ready with twenty men, to join the escort of two companies of the regiment, under the command of the junior Major, which would pass by my quarters at nine the following morning towards the place of execution, with the condemned men in charge.

I was prepared for this, and thought myself lucky that the orders were not accompanied by a reprimand. And that next inevitable morning came round, wet, cold, dismal; and the day it ushered in left an analogous impression on my mind that the many thousand days which have since rolled on—waves of the tide of time—have not effaced. The moving picture that passed before my eyes in all its shocking details is this moment resting vividly on my memory. Often and often have I intended to give its description in writing—to weave it into some story of Irish life, as an illustration of the way in which the most awful acts of administrative justice were at the time performed, and a warning to the harsh and reckless agents of power. But I as often threw the pen aside, and shrank from sullyng the pages of modern romance with a record of such barbarous reality. In this work however I do not see the same objection. Each sketch is a chapter in itself, devoted to the recital of facts varied and independent of each other. Each standing out in relief, apart and isolated; fragments of a living panorama that embraced a wide extent of incidents, joined by connecting links, each with a separate existence, and possibly a peculiar interest of its own. Such as the one in question was, it has lain on my mind like

a long-suppressed thought struggling for utterance—but in no degree of the nature of a crime, agitating a guilty conscience and goading the perpetrator to confession.

In the most painful performance of my duty I had my detachment under arms in good time ; and punctually at the appointed hour the heavy sound of a low-backed car was heard rumbling slowly along the road. Soon after the Major appeared, muffled in his cloak on his well-known grey charger, at the head of the escort which he halted before my barrack, the car being somewhere near the middle of the two hundred soldiers. The men were allowed to fall out of the ranks, and to pile their arms for half an hour's rest, leaving them under the care of the subaltern's guard which kept close to the prisoners. The half-dozen other officers, equally cold and drenched with rain, were glad to take shelter in my confined quarters and to partake of whatever I had hastily provided for them. But although we interchanged our usual friendly greetings there never was seen a less cheerful *rencontre* between comrades commonly so light and careless, so full of jokes and fun. I did not hear even a sound of gaiety from the non-commissioned officers or privates who relieved each other in shivering groups before the fire in the

detachment's little mess-room. A dead weight had fallen on us all.

At the expiration of the half-hour the bugle sounded, the men fell in, the stragglers through the village were soon in the ranks, I took the place assigned to me with my little reinforcement, the word "March!" was given, and we were all stepping mechanically on our dreary route.

I had passed close to the car on which the two wretched culprits sat side by side, in straw, their backs to the horse. They were covered with large frieze coats, their hats were low on their brows, their heads bent forward and their faces not to be seen, even if I could have brought myself to stare at them, which I could not. Across the lower end of the car lay the figure of a third man, dressed in a ragged suit of black, his face buried in the straw, and his body soaking with rain from which it had no shelter. This I was told was the hangman.

The mournful procession moved slowly on, through rain and fog and mud for six weary Irish miles. Not a word was spoken aloud, and very few even murmured, except when groups of country people, as we passed through the village or were met by them at cross-roads or in straggling hamlets, were unable to restrain their feel-

ings at the "sorry sight," and burst into lamentations or gave vent to their excitement, in broken phrase in Irish—blessings on the unhappy prisoners and curses on the unjoyous band who were conducting them to their fate.

We reached our destination about noon or something later. At the foot of the hill we were met by the under-sheriff and his myrmidons, and also by the priest appointed to assist at the final preparations. He took his place along with the poor wretches on the car, dispossessing the unholy ruffian whose presence there was an outrage to all decent consideration for the condemned. The draggled miscreant trudged doggedly beside the car, his bloated features, bleared eyes, and fiery complexion, speaking plainly his half-drunken, half-sleepy state. He was horrible to look at.

Several bodies of troops, each quite as numerous as ours, had already taken up their position on the hill, making altogether perhaps a thousand—a formidable array. As we ascended towards the summit the clouds suddenly opened, and a burst of sunshine flooded the whole scene, and wild and impressive it was. The wintry landscape was of great extent; bleak hills near and distant, wide plains, the swollen river and flooded low grounds, massive leafless woods in

gloomy shadow, the rain sweeping in broad sheets across them, as the wind carried it off from the broken clouds, fringed with radiance and leaving large spaces for the brilliant blue of heaven.

The combination of natural objects was sublime. But how degraded and disfigured it appeared to me, as I looked on the miserable objects slowly ascending the elevation from which the glorious panorama was displayed. Two doomed victims of inexorable law, dragged up in shame and sorrow, to be strangled to death for an offence which merited no such extreme punishment. Hundreds of armed men to protect the sacrifice which a knot of cruel beings were so ready and anxious to consummate. A crowd of horrified spectators, sympathizing with the sufferers, hating the law and those who carried it out—vengeance in their hearts, and deep and dark resolve for the hour of its exercise.

Yes, it was an outrage against nature to act that dreadful drama in such a place. The face of heaven should never witness such a scene. If society require—and I conscientiously believe it does—the punishment of death for its protection, it should be inflicted only for the foul and unpardonable crime of murder with malice aforethought; and when the fearful penalty is

demanding of the guilty ones, it should be solemnly paid in suitable time and place. If the enclosure of the gaol-yard does not afford sufficient publicity for example sake, at least let the confined street with gloomy prison walls at one side and a range of overshadowing houses at the other be enough. The ghastly scaffold should not blur the open walks of nature, nor the liberal air be tainted by deeds more fitting a charnel vault. So witnessed they strike no awe into the spectator's soul. They arouse all the fiercest passions which a dull solemnity might have kept down. Every breeze passing over the desecrated landscape fans the flame. The insulted feelings appeal direct to heaven which shines visibly upon their embodied expression, as the kindred, the friends, perhaps the very associates, of the victim raise their voices in a united cry to that supreme throne of justice.

This is no imagined picture, nor even an embellished fact. It took place to the very letter.

Arrived at the summit which was crowned by the gallows erected in good time, two nooses dangling in gaping readiness, few and brief preparations were required. The under-sheriff and his assistants soon placed the car under the cross beam, and they stood by the horse's head while the condemned men, their arms pinioned and their outer garments thrown off, stepped down

and knelt on the ground before the priest, who, breviary in hand, poured words of consolation and encouragement into their listening hearts.

Up to that time I seemed to have a misty and indistinct notion of what was passing before my eyes. But as the final moment drew near, my sight became clearer—that is to say, my nerves gained new tension, as is always the case in any crisis of danger to oneself or others; and I looked unflinchingly upon the group of priest and penitents. The men soon stood actively up from their kneeling posture, and they both seemed firm and resigned. One of them was short and of ordinary appearance. The other—and he was the absorbing object of my interest—was a figure fit for the Adonis of some studio. No artist need have sought a finer model. Of tall stature, light and graceful form, and with features of refined and youthful beauty, there stood the being, in whom the eyes of my prejudiced informant would see nothing (had they really examined him) but a coarse and brutal expression. All the lookers-on must have been struck as I was with the appearance of the wretched boy, who was never to fulfil the promise of developed manhood.

Emerging from the circle of soldiers who stood between the crowds of country-people and the

stage—so to call it, for there was no scaffold—a fine-looking peasant was allowed to approach. It was the father of the poor youth! He advanced close and embraced him, while the odious executioner was in the act of more closely binding his arms. His grey frieze coat lay on the ground beside him, and as he said his last words of leave-taking—not audible at the distance the troops were placed at—the old man lifted up the coat, the parting token of remembrance from child to parent. But the sordid hangman darted forward and snatched the garment, his miserable perquisite. With lightning speed the young man sprang towards him, his pale face flushed with rage, his eyes flashing, his clenched fist ready to strike—but his tightly-corded arm was unable to quit his side and deal the intended blow. What painter could give the expression of that look and attitude, of anger, energy, despair! He turned away with impatient movement, and assisted by one of the attendant bailiffs, mounted the car, and took his place under the beam. The hangman scrambled up beside him, fixed the rope in its place, and was in the act of helping up the other sufferer, when the old jaded horse, by some unaccountable fit of impatience, reared up, forced his way from the grasp of the under-sheriff and two or three men, dashed for-

ward with the car, flinging the hangman to the earth—God! how every one present must have felt an impulsive hope that he was killed on the spot!—while the poor struggling youth was lifted off his unsteady footing and thrown lengthways on the horse's back, his right hand clutching and dragging out a whole fist-full of the mane in its last convulsive straining at life. In a moment he was swinging backwards and forwards—an appalling sight—while the hangman rising unhurt from the ground, deliberately stood up on tiptoe and placed a white cap over the face that glared at him in the death agony.

An irrepressible burst of horror escaped from the shocked throng—soldiers, peasantry, all—and even at this remote distance of time, I cannot understand how the spell-bound thousands were restrained from rushing forward and snatching the butchered victim from his fate. An instinct of submission or of discipline, a sense of duty, the necessities of civilization? are these the impulses, separate or combined, which make men do such violence to their natural feelings in peace and war? witness, suffer, or inflict so much upon their fellow-men!

But although no one moved voluntarily from his place, or stirred a limb or a muscle to arrest the progress of the scene, one man close beside

me, a Grenadier of my own detachment, a veteran who had seen real service in foreign wars, dropped fainting to the ground ; and not far behind us, at the same instant, loud shrieks broke from a young girl who fell in strong convulsions—the sister of the legally murdered man, who, true to the terrible custom of the Irish peasantry, had accompanied her father and several members of the family to witness the shocking sight.

For half an hour that fine specimen of human beauty, that poor victim of bad example and worse government, hung swinging to and fro like a dead dog, the villainous wretch who for some paltry stipend had done him to death lying beneath him on the ground on his back, his arms crossed on his breast, and coolly waiting till he was roused up by the sheriff to perform the same deadly office to the other wretch, who knelt all the time beside the priest, waiting his dreadful doom, and dying a thousand deaths the while. The horse having been caught and the car again placed in position, the second victim was soon despatched, and with less revolting mismanagement than the first. And the bodies being cut down, the shocked and furious crowd of peasantry unable longer to restrain their passion, loud yells of exasperated fury broke all around. The military were not on that occasion the objects of

their execration. The civil officials, the sheriff and his men, and above all the repulsive and disgusting executioner, were assailed by every epithet of opprobrium and every threat of revenge. Had not the large force of soldiery been present they would have been torn to pieces. But they were hemmed in and protected, and so carried off in safety. The mournful march towards our respective quarters was soon begun. My route was taken independently across the country, over open pastures, on narrow paths, and occasionally through copses and young plantations for short cuts. The scattered force was broken into so many small parties as they took their different directions, independent of the main body, which returned by a different road to headquarters, that the mob of peasants, unarmed, without plan or concentration, could not muster in sufficient numbers to have effected serious harm to any one of the detachments even had they been so inclined. Groups of them hovered on our flanks for two or three miles, as if they longed and waited for an opportunity to fall upon some straggler. But by degrees they dispersed, and I regained my barracks about dusk, and found the serjeant and ten men, whom I had left behind, all safe and unobstructed during my absence. The men whom I had with me, tired like

myself, and with harrowed feelings and painful recollections, were glad to get a long night's repose ; and I don't think that any of us were disposed to revert to the horrors of the day.

Yet now, after a long, long lapse of time, most of the witnesses being many a year dead and gone, I have irresistibly followed out my constant wish of putting this sorrowful transaction on record. I am, now that the task is done, surprised that I could have got through it, all hurried as it has been. Frequently has my hand stopped while I wrote. And I conclude my mournful sketch, with a fervent wish that Ireland has never since been disgraced by another such barbarous transaction ; and a sentiment of rejoicing, that humanity has so far triumphed as to forbid for ever the infliction of death for any offence short of the forcible and malicious act of taking a fellow-creature's life, cases of war punishments being exceptional and unavoidable.

CHAPTER IV.

BACHELORS' HALL.

A MAN-HUNT WITH BLOODHOUNDS.

THERE is in one of the southern districts a group of rocky hills, called in the neighbourhood the Slievenamora Mountains (but I doubt if any map so designates them,) so bleak, lonely, and isolated, that they look like an accidental heap thrown carelessly into creation's lap after the rest of the world was made.

They show no signs of continuity with the plain they stand on. There is no gradation of earth and stone, no trees or shrubs on their sides, no tufts of rushes or coarse grass, like those close to their base, to tell of a common soil or a geological connection. Artificial mounds of rockwork, fantastically raised in a garden, may give a miniature notion of this unearthly-looking mass. But it is unique almost in its dreary and seemingly purposeless existence

On the topmost height of its loftiest point

there is a lake of unknown depth, bearing the euphonious name of Moonavallah. No fish have ever been caught, or indeed seen in it; nor was a bird of any kind, not even a swallow, ever known to hover over or skim its surface. Very few eyes have looked on the place at all. It is avoided by the peasantry as a spot bearing a curse, read out as it were by popular consent, without any direct anathema being lannched against it.

On the edge of the water there is one old, blasted tree, I know not of what species, though I saw it on one memorable occasion; and a wizard-looking thing it was, without leaf or bark, giving the idea of centuries of sapless age, and with only two straggling branches stretching towards the lake. No violence of fancy could imagine that such a demon-like skeleton was giving its blessing to the water, though the attitude was something like it, as the curved trunk leant stooping forward with its gnarled limbs expanded at each side.

I could not learn of any tradition being attached to this dismal place. I wondered the Roman Catholic clergy had not fixed on it for a haunt of pilgrimage or penance; but it was abandoned even by superstition to an eternal loneliness.

About three miles from this striking feature in a most dreary landscape, stood a house called Knockderrig, built of dark, grey stone, a fortress kind of mansion, as old as the civil wars of Elizabeth's time, square, harsh, and uncouth, surrounded by a moat and thick wall, without wood, shrubbery, or garden, as exteriorly comfortless a residence as can be well imagined. It looked straight at Slievenamora, and the mountain might well return the gaze. They were congenial objects of ugliness in nature and art. Knockderrig had however the advantage of being inhabited. Smoke issued from its chimneys, and gave it an air of life; while an almost continual din of yelping, barking, and howling, in all the most disagreeable tones of canine discord, sounded a deep diapason day and night. To those who came in sight of the hill, and in hearing of the house, it was hard to say which was most awful and repulsive—the silence of the one or the noises of the other.

But there was an owner and occupier, and he had his attendants and followers. A queer set they were. The owner was a single man, his servants were all bachelors. In fact no woman was ever known to enter the house, though wild stories were rife, about subterranean passages leading far into the forest, a mile or more away,

of young girls having disappeared from the neighbourhood and never being heard of again ; and one was said to have returned home, no one knew how, one night after a year's absence, demented and unable to give any coherent account of herself. Bailiffs who had ventured to this dangerous stronghold for purposes of legal violence were driven back with much greater than they intended to inflict. Torn by dogs, and beaten by men, they were glad to make a speedy retreat on several occasions ; and the squire of Knockderrig was allowed, after various such failures, to revel in a sort of tolerated outlawry, the penalties of which were never carried to excess.

He was a strange man to look at, half dwarf, half giant. His head and bust were large and broadly developed. Had the first been cut off he would have presented a splendid torso. But his arms were disproportionately short ; his thighs still more so ; legs he had none, but two misshapen imitations, decked in breeches and boots, dangled below. He was always wheeled about his house in a chair, and lifted into his saddle when he went out. And when once in that saddle, mounted on one of his jet-black hunters, he was in his element. Nothing could move him from his seat. How he kept it was a miracle.

He rode at everything, over everything. He was never known to fall but when his horse did, and that was seldom, for he had a marvellous hand and could manage any animal. He anticipated Rarey by nearly half a century. He was more of a Centaur when mounted than of a man when unhorsed. He lost half his nature when he resumed his humanity.

His features were marked, vigorous, and handsome. His hair grizzled, beard and whiskers the same. His voice was terrible—no other word could express the nature of its deep, iron, grating sound, which was heard in all its power when he addressed his hounds—for he always hunted them himself—and they answered as if they echoed his utterance, whether singly or in the pack. And such a pack! I suppose there never was anything like it. It consisted of four or five and twenty couples, and seemed to combine all sort of breeds, crosses, and contradictions; stag-hound, fox-hound, harrier, beagle, were all represented in this motley *mélange* of large and small, red, white, black, tan,—all colours.

There were specimens of the Irish deer-hound so celebrated in the ballads of the North, the companions of the Norwegian sea-kings and other adventurers. Black dogs of the old St. Hubert breed, and white ones of that of St.

Roche, greyhounds of huge size, the "Lordes of dogges" according to Sir Philip Sidney; and strange large-headed, lob-eared, curly-tailed beasts of no specific class, which might be thought descendants from the English mastiffs of the Knights of Rhodes, with a mixture of the St. Bernard and the Newfoundland all jumbled together. The variety was wonderful, for there did not seem to be any two really alike, nor any one that could be called thorough-bred of any kind. They reminded one of Macbeth's enumeration, though they did not in all points answer it.

"Hounds and greyhounds, mongrels, spaniels, curs,
Shoughs, water-rugs, and demi-wolves;
But all called dogs."

This was the *regular* pack for everyday hunting; and he did hunt every possible day, at all seasons, in all weathers, scent or no scent, game or no game; for if there was no chance of fox or hare or outlying deer, he ordered a drag, a red herring being quite enough for his purpose, so as he could have his wild chase across the large extent of country which he had secured for his sport.

But there was besides the agglomeration just described, a select, mysterious, secret pack, consisting of six couples, which were only seen by mere accident by any but the squire and his

immediate attendants. They had been almost smuggled into the country, and brought by stealth and at night to Knockderrig, from a ship direct from the West Indies, which landed them at Cork. Strange rumours as to their nature and purpose were afloat. But the general and, as I soon ascertained, the true impression was, that they were blood-hounds, used in Jamaica for hunting down runaway and revolted maroons, but long unknown in Europe, and only in much later years introduced into the United States, for the brutal carrying on of the war against the Indians in Florida.

The blood-hound was anciently a great favourite in Spain, and was naturalized by Alva in the Netherlands, as it had been by his countrymen in Mexico and Peru in the cruel warfare of those days, and Velasquez has frequently represented them in his pictures singly or in groups. But until the case of which I am tracing some recollections, I doubt if those revolting animals had been at all known in our islands. I shall have more to say of them by-and-by.

The squire of Knockderrig was not quite a gentleman, nor absolutely a squireen. He was something between both. The owner of an extensive West India property, his resources were large but fluctuating, and he squandered them

profusely in his own peculiar way. He was neither educated nor well-bred, not ignorant, nor yet well read. He was capable of talking fluently on general subjects, and on some particular ones, such as horses and dogs and wild animals of all kinds, he had the oracular tone of great practical experience. He was a hard liver and a desperate horseman. Knowing little of the world, for he and it reciprocally avoided each other, not in society, yet with a certain set of associates who saved him from sinking into total savagery. He would have been called in the Western States of America "half horse, half alligator." In Ireland he was only a mixture of man and beast.

The household of this unattractive person—to speak in "silken terms precise"—was rather numerous, but it was according to his taste select. The most prominent member of it was Keeravan the huntsman, a crabbed, cross-grained little man, looking any age between forty and sixty, with plenty of wrinkles but no grey hair, active and wiry, as good a horseman and as hard a rider as his master, but too cunning ever to come into rivalry with him, and taking good care never to ride *at* him, but always wide both of him and the hounds, which it was his business to feed, not to hunt.

Next came the whipper-in, who held pretty nearly the same station in regard to the huntsman as the latter did to the Squire; for Keeravan, though a servant like his assistant, had an air of authority very imposing; and he was known to be his master's right-hand man, always ready and often employed to do deeds which nobody's left hand ought to know anything about. The whipper-in was a brisk, active fellow, who might have counted three or four and twenty summers—had I calculated Keeravan's age in that fashion, I should have done it by *winters*—with the reckless air of youth and a devil-may-care disposition. His name was Shemus, *Anglicè* James. He was of very dark complexion, not particular about shaving more than once a fortnight or three weeks or so; and consequently looking so black that the country people, by way of pleasantry, called him *Shemus-bawn*, the Irish for white, or fair.

Godroon, I know not the derivation of the name, was the chief of the indoor department. He did most of the duties of butler and house steward. He was the handiest of servitors, up to anything, quick and intelligent in mind, and of most extraordinary personal activity. He was the fastest runner and the best jumper in the country. He always carried a light pole when

he went from home to see his "people," or his sweetheart who lived a few miles off with hers—her people I mean—and it was a sight worth seeing to mark the way in which he skipped along the fields and bounded over the dykes or stone-walls by the aid of his pole. His pet name in the neighbourhood was the flying boy—at least that was the translation given me of his Irish *sobriquet*, which I forget in the original; and he was well entitled to it, for he constantly followed the hounds on foot, and in some of the longest and hardest runs was often in at the death and decorated with the *brush*, when well-mounted men were thrown out and left far behind. He had grey eyes, dark brown hair, a fresh colour in his cheeks, showing that health reigned rampant through his frame, and the expression of his features were altogether most prepossessing. As he was by far the best-looking among the domestics, so was Thiggen Butch, nicknamed the bull-baiter, by very far the worst. This individual, also a young man, was besides that an ill-favoured and clumsily made one. His physiognomy was dull and coarse. His little blue eyes were sunk deep under a projecting brow. His hair, naturally of the darkest crineous tinge of red, was so shaded with the clotted and uncombed dust of long accumulation that it could

scarce be called any but mud-coloured. Yet this creature had his favourable peculiarities like the rest. He was the strongest-armed man of the lot—to use a familiar phrase. On one occasion he had seduced a remarkably fierce bull into a bog, and the pursuing beast when up to its body in the morass, was so belaboured and battered by Thigeen's cudgel, that when he dragged it out by the tail thoroughly subdued, it followed him about the fields like a tame animal though retaining its ferocity for all others. This feat procured Thigeen his title, and he was very proud of it, as most created grandees are of theirs, even without doing anything to earn them, though they may in political difficulties sometimes take *their* bulls by the horns.

The occupations of Thigeen Butch seemed of a general nature. He was a sort of groom of the chamber, for he attended to the usual duties performed by housemaids. He with Godroon waited at table, as also did Shemus Bawn when there was a large party as was frequently the case, for the Squire was very hospitable and kept open house for almost all comers of his acquaintance. Such being the case his cook was a person of importance. And I had once a glimpse of that corpulent, fiery-faced functionary in the act of pursuing three or four of the strag-

gling hounds who had prowled into the kitchen, their habit of a forenoon or afternoon, no matter which, and carried off bodily a large leg of mutton which was roasting before the fire. The sight of those ravenous dogs tearing their prey to pieces in the courtyard, and the infuriated cook basting them with an enormous iron ladle, was the first trait of domestic manners that caught my attention, as I dismounted from my horse on my only visit to Knockderrig.

The quarters of myself and my detachment were between seven and eight miles distant, and there were no nearer neighbours for the Squire, and no visiting intercourse between him and the few families scattered widely even as far off as that. His infirmities were a bar to his frequenting other houses than his own, and the reputation he and it bore was not inviting to heads of families. Some of the young men were glad to go as often as they could to share the dissipated hospitalities of Knockderrig, and the accounts of their orgies which oozed out excited at once the amaze and the alarm of the fathers and mothers of the rising generation. The drinking bouts were appalling—but Irishmen in those days were not easily frightened at any quantity of whiskey “drunk on the premises.” But the frequent quarrels and occasional duels, followed

sometimes by wounds and once or twice by a death, naturally excited a strong prejudice against the lone lord of misrule and all his associations.

He was always glad to pick up a new recruit for his limited list of acquaintances, and he consequently made it a point to invite any military man at all within reach as soon as he heard of his arrival in the country. I very soon had a note from him couched in cordial terms, "begging me to excuse a formal visit, but hoping I would fix a day for coming over early to meet a few friends, take a gallop with the dogs, 'pot luck' at dark, a broiled bone at midnight, and a shake-down as soon after sunrise as was agreeable."

This characteristic invitation told pretty plainly what I was to expect, which was quite in keeping with what I had heard of my host that was to be; for I wrote an acceptance, and made my arrangements accordingly, for a week from that day.

In the interval I went out one morning deer-stalking, with a couple of the keepers belonging to a nobleman in my near neighbourhood, from whom, in addition to the most unbounded hospitality, I had the almost exclusive permission of sporting over his extensive property, besides

the choice of several horses of his stud, able to carry my then weight of about ten stone over anything. My "noble friend" (though I was not officially entitled to call him so) kept no hounds. That was left for his successor in the next generation, fatally for himself and to the irreparable loss of the neighbourhood. But in my time the attractions were in the house rather than out of it, though *they* too were many. But those days were more adapted for the enjoyment of intellectual tastes than for the boisterous delights of field sports on a grand scale. And I may, in looking back to the incongruous events which I am somewhat wandering from, be excused for paying the tribute of these few words to the scene, where any germs of literary fancy or artistic feeling that nature gave me, were developed by the example and encouragement of a refined and cultivated circle, often changing but always sustained by new accessions of talent and accomplishments.

But although there was no pack of hounds—his Lordship's gout and her Ladyship's dislike to their associations amounting to prohibitory laws—there were abundance of sporting-dogs, properly so called, noble Irish setters, pointers, and retrievers of the highest blood—with quantities of snipe, wild-fowl, and partridges, no pheasants

—but about the best woodcock-shooting in Ireland, immense numbers of hares and rabbits, and a park well stocked with deer, some of whom at times broke out of the enclosure; and on the morning I am now getting back to as fast as my pen will carry me, it was one of those outlyers I was engaged in stalking through the brakes, attended by old Crogan the head keeper and his son.

“What wild wail was that? Is it the *keen-ing* of women at a funeral?” asked I of the old keeper.

“No, Sir, I wish it was; it’s nothing so pleasant,” replied he. “It’s that cursed hell-pack from Knockderrig that’s coming to cross us, and make us lose the finest buck you have a chance of shooting for many a day.”

“Was that the cry of hounds? I never heard the like of it,” said I.

“Nor nobody else, Sir. It’s the cry of hounds sure enough, but the devil himself, saving your Honour’s presence, never had such a band of music. Listen! There they go.”

I did listen, and really the wild sound had something inexpressibly awful and unearthly in it. Nothing was to be seen two hundred yards off, a heavy mist lying over the valley and the woods on the skirts of which we were. The invisible

pack gave occasional bursts of the same low deep wail that struck me as so unlike the voice of ordinary hounds, and it was impossible to judge of its distance from us.

"Where are they, Crogan?" asked I. "I'd give anything to see them."

"Then let's just get on that crag, hanging right over the glen down yonder; the unlucky beasts are surely making straight for the very spot where Mustagh Macroon marked the four-antlered black stag in the heather that your Honour will never get a shot at this blessed morning."

"Never mind, Crogan—we'll be sure to find another. Let's push on to the crag!" exclaimed I impatiently, for I was longing much to make even a distant acquaintance with the famous pack I had heard so much of, and also perhaps catch a flying peep at the Squire.

We quickly cleared the copse, and soon scrambled up the crag that hung out over a most romantic ravine, but we could only hear the gurgling of the stream that ran through it, for the mist covered it like a thick veil. The sound of the dogs came nearer and nearer. I was completely puzzled by them, they were so confused and discordant; and being mixed in an irregular chorus, there was no knowing what to make of them. The uncertain, broken, disconnected

voices told that there was nothing sure in the scent they caught at times and lost again; but, judging from Crogan's opinion, they had just entered the upper and furthest part of the glen, when a sudden and loud burst in a chorus, wilder than that of the demons in 'Der Freischütz,' or 'Robert le Diable,' proclaimed that the quarry was found and that the whole pack were in full cry. And sure enough we saw in the mist the form of a noble black stag bounding gracefully along the ravine. It was soon lost to our view, and quickly succeeded by the promiscuous pack which I have already and perhaps prematurely described, sweeping on in a straggling but still connected troop, more like dense shadows than solid, substantial things; and close to their skirts, hallooing them forward, was the figure of a man on a large black horse, whom it did not require Crogan's announcement to let me recognize as the redoubtable Squire, close followed by two attendants, the huntsman and whipper-in with whom my readers are already acquainted. The place through which they rode close following the hounds, was most dangerous ground, rocky, marshy, and interrupted by walls and dykes. Over several of these obstructions I could see the shadowy forms of men and horses springing and plunging with desperate force.

But the whole scene was more like the clever apparatus of some first-rate theatre than a fact of real sporting life. The view of the actors, men and beasts, was so fugitive and vapoury, the voices, human and canine, so strange, the whole combination was so fiend-like I may almost say, that it brought to my mind all I had read of Odin and his enchanted dogs in Swedish romance, of St. Hubert and his, of Fingal with his irregular pack, and of the Skye dogs and hell-hounds of Welsh traditionary tales. And many years afterwards, when I have been wandering in the Black Forest or the Odenwald of Germany, listening to tales of the wild Jäger and his unearthly followers, my mind has reverted to the almost "unreal mockery" of that Irish spectacle, and of the most serious adventure by which it was in a few days followed up. Having been cheated of our marked game for that morning, I bore away back with my disappointed and grumbling attendants to the place from whence we came, fixing on another day to have my revenge.

For my visit to Knockderrig I had secured three companions; the son of the clergyman of the parish, a gay, light-brained young fellow, and the Major of a regiment of German cavalry, quartered in a town not far off, besides a Lieutenant,

who was also riding-master of the same regiment. The Major was stout, stupid, and good-natured; the riding-master well up to his business in the *manége*, stiff, and upright in his saddle, and both the men capable of any amount of whatever drink they were used to. The trio breakfasted with me, my barracks being the rendezvous, and having dispatched a *gossoon* with a light one-horsed cart to carry our portmanteaus or valises, we set out about ten o'clock of a March morning, I mounted on my favourite black mare (from the Marquess's stable) out of compliment to the prevalent colour of the Squire. Taking things easily, we were an hour on the road, and when we got past a turn which gave us a good view of the mountain and the castle (as they were called by courtesy) we could not help pulling up simultaneously, struck with these two prominent features in the hard-favoured landscape. The parson's son had often seen it on previous visits to Knockderrig, but it was new to the rest of us, and we stared at it accordingly, and listened to the wild music from the kennel, which I well remembered as the same voices though not the same tune I had heard a few days before.

The "boys" were on the look-out for us, so when we reached the moat and crossed the wooden bridge, and entered the gate, we were

received with due honour, our horses were taken by two smart grooms and led to a stable, and it was just then that the cook emerged from the kitchen in one of the wings, in hot pursuit of the marauding dogs, all of different breeds but of the same taste for underdone mutton, which they seemed to like better in a hash than roasted.

We, the visitors, laughed heartily at this introductory incident, so did the servants all, and so did the Squire himself who saw it from the hall door, where he was waiting to give us the *Cead mille a faulthagh*, sitting in his chair like a king on his throne. After cordial welcoming and hand-shaking with each of us, we were turned over to the care of Thigeen Butch and another "boy"—and installed in our several apartments, very comfortably, myself and the parson's son occupying the same room and the two Germans another. As my readers are as well acquainted with the family as I was myself on this occasion I need not describe them. I have only to mention the other visitors who were there before us or who dropped in to lunch or at dinner-time. These were a dissipated-looking man whom I had met before, named Jack Mandeville, whose theatrical air, careless costume, and hat on one side of his head spoke a rollicking, jovial character, and whose magnificent barytone voice and fine style

of after-dinner singing, but without much musical knowledge, made him everywhere a welcome guest. The next was a short, stout, high-shouldered gentleman who was familiarly called "my Lord" from the boss that reared itself up between them. He had a defect in his voice and could only give utterance to his few ideas in a hoarse undertone, and he therefore seldom spoke at all and no one seemed to take the trouble of listening to what he murmured. There was a swaggering young fellow of about forty-five, with dangling red curls hanging over the collar of his green coat and brass buttons. He had a particularly large frill to his shirt (we all wore frills in those days) and an enormous mass of yellowish-white muslin in double or triple folds, round his neck—and he was called ironically but good-humouredly Sir Jeffrey—why I did not inquire, but he was clearly neither knight nor baronet, yet he took his honorary title quite complacently, and as if he felt that he had inherited or earned it. The last of the company, and he only came in just as we sat down to dinner (after a two hours' "gallop with the dogs"—that is, with *some* of them), the last-comer was Father Kilpatrick, the coadjutor of the parish priest, who was glad of the excuse of seeing after the spiritual wants of the household,

to enjoy the privilege of sharing occasionally in the bodily comforts which the Squire lavished so freely on his guests. The elder priest, Father Dunn, did not think it quite becoming in him to join in the revelries of Knockderrig, but he knew it was good policy to let the Church be represented, by his assistant in the parish duties, at the hospitable board of the Squire, who generously contributed to all the calls for chapel repairs and sundry other requirements.

I think I have thus accounted for eight guests, myself included, and recollecting every individual so accurately at this great distance of time, I am only surprised that I should entirely forget the ninth man, for I am sure that, with our host, we made ten at table. But this only proves that there is one screw loose in my brain. No wonder! It is only strange that so many should remain unruined or undislocated, to hold memory so fast on its "seat."

We had gone out in our afternoon gallop with about half the pack, and soon found a fox in a gorse cover, where the Squire had him snug for our sport. I rode a roan horse with a rat tail, for our host mounted each of his friends on this little airing, reserving our own animals for the real hunt he intended for us the next day. I was well carried, and we had a lively run, and the

ragged-looking pack killed the fox cleverly. There was however nothing in the scene to be compared with the vague and hazy exhibition I had marked with old Crogan in the ravine. The animals all were like living things and not shadowy phantoms, and the Squire's voice though fearfully harsh and grating was human. He was lifted up by a couple of the men into his saddle on a horse of real flesh and blood, and it bounded under him like a steed that knew its rider.

But he soon had it in hand, and he was a real wonder with his false legs flapping against the sides, and his seat as firm and sure as if he was nailed down to it. He counted his dogs, and rode boldly, and indeed every one did so, of the five or six who went out with him, except the old Major, who dodged about for gaps and gates in very heavy-dragoon style. And the only incident of the hunt *that day* worth remarking was that "my Lord" had a serious fall from his sorrel nag in going over a stiff fence, and was pitched clean (though he came out dirty) into a deep ditch at the other side. Every one was in advance but the German Major, and either his humanity or an excuse for giving in made him dismount and throw himself down beside his prostrate Lordship, whose particular conformation he had not before observed. But now seeing him doubled up, nearly senseless, and his head so buried in his body, he

began furiously pulling at it, hoping to amend what he thought must be a broken neck or something like it. His victim rousing at the shock implored him to desist, faintly and hoarsely calling, not exactly *out* but as far out as he could, "I was born so, I was born so!" The Major's imperfect knowledge of English, and an incipient deafness, made him insensible to the appeal, and he would assuredly have effected the dislocation he meant to remedy had not Godroon, who was close following the hunt, leaped with his pole most opportunely over the ditch at the very place where the two men were struggling, and knowing the nature of my Lord's shape he came to the rescue, got him out of the grasp of the neck-fracturing Major and out of the ditch as well, and by some active bounds he soon came up with his Lordship's nag, replaced *him* in the saddle—and then returned home to superintend the preparations for dinner. The good-humoured hunchback told the story for and against himself. The Major was overwhelmed with regret and shame at his mistake, but almost every one else thought the whole adventure capital fun; too many persons, themselves free from personal defects, having small consideration towards those who, "disguise it as they may," are always sensitive to their own disfigurements, whether natural or accidental.

I need not describe our dinner. For those who have been accustomed to the open-house hospitality of provincial Ireland it is unnecessary. To the uninitiated stranger who has never been blessed with a specimen of Irish sporting life in the first quarter of the present century, it would not be believed a true picture. The boiled turkey and the roast goose, the round of beef and the loin of veal, the latter *improvisé* to replace the lost leg of mutton, the haunch of venison, the tongue, the bacon, the hams, the chickens, the hare, teal, and woodcocks, the splendid vegetables—to say nothing of the potatoes, followed by apple-pies and plum-pudding, jam bolster, jelly, *blanc-manger* (which we called in those days “blamange”), pancakes, fritters, fruits in and out of season, West India ginger and pickles of the first quality, cheese of the best kinds, except Irish Mulahawn, which was detestable, tables groaning with the weight of the repast, and men making so light of it! What appetites too! How trifling and insignificant does a *restaurateur’s carte* or a *dîner à la Russe* of these degenerate days appear; and how very little people eat now compared to what they used to do!

But I said I would not attempt to describe the dinner, and I shall keep my word, and leave it and the execution done upon it “to the im-

agination"—according to the old plan of those minute chroniclers, who having exhausted their facts pretend to leave everything to fancy. But may I be pardoned a few words about the fluid combinations, so naturally required to liquidate that complexed and confused account of solid materials just alluded to?

The Madeira and sherry and champagne (a dear luxury during the wars with France), the port and claret brought up in baskets from the cellar, the liqueurs (particularly the genuine Curaçoa), the Cognac, the Hollands, the rum (imported direct from Port Royal to Waterford)—and the whiskey, distilled at the very foot of Slievenamora in iron pots over peat fires—the real, genuine, unadulterated illicit *potheen*, could any *connoisseur* find any way to do justice to their various merits but by making up the difference in a general mixing, so that none should have cause to be jealous? And was not that liberal plan duly followed out? Didn't the hobnobbing begin with the very first slice cut from the breast of the boiled turkey by the Squire at the head of the table, and the prompt dissection of the roast goose by Sir Jeffrey at the foot of it? Every man asked his neighbour to the right and left to drink a glass of wine with him, and the neighbours asked him in return, and every-

body else asked somebody else, and somebody did the same with everybody. And the host made it a point to ask each of his guests, and every guest of course asked the host. And then one after another was requested to "join" some couple that were engaged to each other. And one jovial fellow being pledged in the usual way to take a glass, replied facetiously, "Two if you please"—and the example was followed by all the rest of the company who relished the joke—and the wine; and so in fact, when the cloth was "drawn," and the dessert put rather stragglingly on the mahogany, that brilliantly reflected every bottle and glass in the beautiful varnish which the Squire was so very proud of, every man was in a perfect state of still imperfect preparation for the sundry rounds of toasts and sentiments, and songs and choruses, and jokes and stories of all kinds.

It was then that the drinking really began. All the dinner practice was mere sharp-shooting, skirmishing for the general engagement. A few rounds of the wine-bottles were followed by a pretty general request for the *potheen*, and sure enough it was produced in plentiful supplies in large decanters, with steaming jugs of boiling water on the sideboard, sugar, lemons, and all the accessories for all kinds of punch, brandy,

rum, or whiskey. Just then a loud burst of laughter at the door of the dining-room was followed by the entrance of two fine florid-looking young men, brothers, Cornelius and Philip Cahill by name, who were not able to come in time for dinner, but whose accession to the party was now hailed by a general view halloo that must have astonished the occupants of the kennel.

"Welcome, welcome, my lads," said the Squire as they strode up to shake hands with him, and while they did the same with all the party all round the table, chairs were placed for them, and the Squire asked one of them, "Well, Corney, my boy, what will you have—wine or punch?"

"A glass of wine, if you please, Squire—while the punch is mixing."

This repartee set the table in a roar, and it is out of the bounds of history or romance to attempt to follow the half-mad scene of revelry that ensued. The Squire was great in his way. Sitting in a chair sufficiently elevated to raise him well above the level of the table, his eyes looked up and down either side from top to bottom, with a restless but methodical attention to every individual. He had a word for every one, and took care to lead the conversation, in very irregular snatches however, to subjects suited

to draw every one out. Every one seemed at ease with himself. There was not a quarrelsome word though plenty of joking; nothing really coarse though fun enough. Toasts and sentiments, but nothing party or sectarian. It was a strange specimen of national manners, but not an unfavourable one.

"Now, gentlemen, a bumper toast, if you please. Fill with your left hands and pass the bottles the wrong way. I am going to give you a round of rascals," exclaimed the Squire with an air of mock gravity, which produced the desired effect of making every one laugh. Every one filled as desired, pushed the bottle backwards, and raised his glass to his head.

"Here's to Lord —— with all dishonour—let every one drink the toast as he likes it."

The name of a leading Irish politician, very unpopular with all parties, was mentioned, and every one laughed but no one was angry, for they all neither loved nor hated—they only despised him.

"Now, my Lord, your toast, if you please—give us a rascal."

"I give you my tailor," squeaked out his Lordship, "he had the insolence to send me his bill yesterday"—and he was toasted and execrated accordingly.

A notorious attorney came next on the list; then a gentleman who had shot a fox in a hunting country; and so on till the round was finished.

"Now, my friends, I'll croak you a song," said our host, and he sang or rather recited a verse of

"Bright Chanticleer proclaims the morn,"

in harsh and dissonant tones; "Tantivy, tantivy, tantivy!" being chorused by the whole party.

"Now, Jack, it's your turn to put the company out of conceit with me—let's hear you give tongue, old fellow!"

And most gloriously did Jack Mandeville "burst into song" at the Squire's request, giving in first-rate style

"Bright Phœbus has mounted the chariot of day,"

that noble old hunting chant. I can fancy I still hear the glasses echoing to his deep metallic tones!

One of the party, I think it was young Corney Cahill, next sang the following (Irish but not Mooreish) Anacreontic:—

"Here's a health to Martin Mulligan's Aunt,
And I'll tell you the reason why—
She eats because she's hungry,
But she drinks *before* she's dry.

“ If ever a man
 Preached over his can,
 Mulligan’s Aunt would cry—
 Come fill up your glass
 And let the toast pass,
 How d’ye know but your neighbour’s dry ?
Chorus : If ever a man, etc.

“ Mulligan’s Aunt was a thirsty old soul,
 And she loved a good story well ;
 But if ever a man preached over his bowl,
 She wished him to the d— in h—

(“ I beg your Reverence’s pardon,” bowing
 to Father Kilpatrick, who nods his forgiveness
 amidst general hilarity.)

“ A good story well told
 Will please young and old,
 So nothing to pleasure deny—
 But fill up your glass,
 And let the toast pass,
 How d’ye know but your neighbour’s dry ?
Chorus : A good story well told,” etc.

There were other stanzas, but I forget them.

Among the more sentimental warblers, Father Kilpatrick was distinguished by his fine melodious voice. I remember his singing a love ballad called ‘ The Thorn,’ the refrain of which was,

“ No, by Heaven, I swear, may I perish
 If ever I plant in thy bosom a thorn !”

which the Coadjutor gave with power, feeling, and emphasis—only he decorously substituted “ honour ” for “ Heaven.”

And my last recollection of those harmonies was Jack Mandeville chanting, in a sort of maudlin recitative, the following address to whiskey, holding a large tumbler of punch of "that ilk" aloft as he sang, and putting it religiously to his lips at the end of every verse.

CHANT.

I.

"O Whiskey Punch, I love you much, for you're the very thing
To level all distinctions 'twixt a beggar and a king.
You lift me up so aisy, and so softly let me down,
That the devil a hair I care what I wear, a canbeen or a crown.

II.

"While you're a coorsin' through my veins I feel so mighty pleasant,
That I cannot jist exactly tell whether I'm prince or peasant.
Maybe I'm one, maybe the other, but that gives me small trouble,
By the powers! I b'lieve I'm both of them, for I think
I'm seein' double.

III.

"The man who first made claret or Made-aira was a botch
To him who first invinted Whiskey, Irish or Scotch;
The praise of pure poteen I'll sing, in epic, ode, or sonnet,
And bad luck to him I say agin who'd throw could water
on it!

IV.

"How mighty fast the room turns round with all the people
in it!
O, I hope this night will shortly end that we might once
more begin it!

For 'tis my delight at morn or night, while our tumblers
we are clinkin',

To turn my head away from bed, and dhrame that I am
drinkin'.

Then Whiskey Punch, long life to you," etc.

Midnight and the "broiled bones," devilled kidneys, and smoked but undressed hams to suit the special German taste came round, and a fresh lease seemed to be taken of the festive board by its occupants of the last six hours. The results were more and more apparent with every stroke of the clock. There was more noise and less harmony. The Squire, in his enthusiasm, after proposing nine times nine in honour of the health of a well-known county beauty, set the example of dashing his glass up against the ceiling, lest it should run the chance of contamination by being again filled for any less interesting toast. Every one did as the host, and a shower of fragments and dust came down on the table—but I forget if any one was hurt by it, or if it fell into any one's eyes.

The plot was thickening but the party was thinning. The German Major was the first to give in. Had the beverage been *Baierish Bier* or *Schnaps* he would have held out for ever, but the potheen was too much for him, and he was led off to bed emphatically drunk soon after the small hours 'gan chime. The next victim was

the priest, who having found his ninth or tenth tumbler of punch rather potent called for hot water to modify its strength.

"Hot water, Thigeen, to his Reverence," said the Squire, with a wink of his eye.

"Hot water !" murmured the Coadjutor.

"Yis, yer Riverence," said Thigeen Butch, lifting the copper kettle that was kept "on the boil" in the embers of the large wood fire, and he filled up the tumbler. The priest half emptied it, and shaking his head and smacking his lips exclaimed, "It's still too strong."

"Then hold it with both hands, your Reverence," said Sir Jeffrey ; "more hot water for his Reverence."

"Yes, Sir," cried Thigeen, obsequiously filling the tumbler again ; but no alteration was produced in the scalding draught. And in fact, to betray the secret, the kettle contained boiling whiskey, not water, and it was purposely administered in these successive overpowering doses to the priest, as a friendly means of getting him quietly out of the way. And he was thus disposed of.

I scarcely know what followed this freak. I began about this time to think the corners of the room seemed rounded off, and that the room itself took a circular form. I know there was a blind piper introduced, and that three or four of the

party danced a jig, and that several jumped over the table, while one or two by some accident fell under it. The Squire held firm to his post, nailed to the mast as it were, like the colours of a ship in a hard fight, and his guests, like a staunch crew, seemed resolved to stick to it while a plank was left afloat.

One abrupt change of scene startled me and the rest into perfect consciousness.

"Out with the lamps and candles—open the shutters!" exclaimed the Squire in a loud voice of command. Several of the servants, who were only waiting for the word, acted on the order with simultaneous alacrity.

"Welcome the daylight!" added he, stretching forth both arms and raising his eyes, as a whole flood of sunshine burst into the room. The sobering effect of this *coup de théâtre* was electrifying. Every man started to his feet and turned to the bright beams with an astonished and almost reverential gaze; somewhat like a group of fire-worshippers hailing the first burst of the Day-god up from the sea into the sky.

"This is the way, boys, we knock two days into one at Knockderrig," said our host laughing loud. "Wheel me out to the hall door—I want a bumper of fresh air.—Who's ready for the hunt?"

"All! all!" was answered in chorus by the

six or seven who were not too much "disguised," or "too powerfully refreshed," in the filigree phrase of the time and country; for which "sewed up" and "screwed" have been, I believe, more recently substituted.

"Keeravan!" roared the Squire.

"Here, your Honour," answered the huntsman.

"Shamus!"

"It's here I am, Sir," said the whipper-in.

"Are the dogs all ready?"

"They're all in the couples, your Honour."

"And the gentlemen's horses?"

"The saddles is on them, Sir."

"Then let them be tight girthed, for I'm going to give them a real run. Now gentlemen," continued our host, as he was wheeled out into the hall and towards the open door, "I am sorry to say I am going to put you off with a drag this morning. I thought to have had a deer for you; but old Crogan is so angry with me for cheating him out of the big black buck the other day, that he has not let a thing out of bounds since then."

"What is the drag?" asked some one.

"You shall see," replied the Squire. "Bring out the drag!"

"Here he is, your Honour," exclaimed a voice; and a figure bounded into the hall from a side

door, in the fashion of "the sprite" in a modern pantomime. But no sprite, ever so demon-like, could be more hideously formed to cast terror into the souls of the child-audience at holiday time, than was the apparition which so suddenly burst upon the full-grown beholders on this memorable morning. It was a living man, in tight dress, with a handkerchief tied round his waist and a close cloth cap on his head, but smeared with blood from crown to sole, even his face; and, as he laughed and showed his white teeth and twinkling eyes through the gory streaks, nothing could be more appalling. Every one of the strangers started and shrank back.

"Don't be afeard, Gintlemen, it isn't a murther I committed. It's only myself that's in it! Godroon, at your sarvice, my Lord, and long life to you; just dressed out to show sport to your Honours. Don't you know me, Sir Jeffrey?"

"This is a sorry sight!" said Jack Mandeville, with a stage start. "Out, damned spot!" extending his hands towards Godroon, as if he would push him back to the door he emerged from.

This bit of theatrical fun brought the rest of us somewhat to ourselves, and the scene, revolting as it was at first, began every minute to have something exciting in it, as the Squire explained that it was a run with the blood-hounds he was about

to treat us to, and that Godroon was the quarry they were to follow.

"But, good God, is there no danger of their catching him?" said some one.

"Oh, not the least, he is used to it," said the Squire.

"So are the eels," remarked another.

"Oh, never fear, there is neither fire nor frying-pan in question.—Are you quite ready, Godroon?"

"Intirely so, Sir," replied "the drag," with an alacrity that was reassuring.

"Then take your pole and take care of yourself, and God speed you!" exclaimed the Squire, in accents serious if not actually solemn. And as Godroon flourished his leaping-pole and cut a few capers out in the court before the house, his master added,—*"Mind your steps, run steadily, and look before you leap—no shouting nor screaming at the dogs—hold your breath well in—mind what I say to you, Godroon."*

"I will, your Honour. What law are you giving me?"

"Twenty minutes."

"Hourra!" cried Godroon.

"You'll want it all. Tubberara bog is a mile off, and the rath is a quarter beyond that. You know you are safe among the elm-trees there, Godroon."

"It's not straight there I'm going, Sir; I must show your Honour and the gentlemen a better sport than that. I'll give a cast in the old plantation first."

"Well, away with you! and once more God speed you!" said the Squire, and the blessing was echoed by every one of the household, who all looked anxious, though highly excited, as if there was something very serious in the "sport" all were preparing for.

Godroon leaped lightly over the fosse by the aid of his pole, and flourishing it in the style of a drum-major marching at the head of a regiment, he started away, as fearless and buoyant as if he was only going out for a little trot with the beagles.

The servants soon brought forth the boots and hunting-frocks worn by the visitors the day before; and (while we equipped ourselves) by order of the Squire a low door in the corner of the court was opened, and the kennel displayed in which the blood-hounds were lodged.

"Out with the beauties," cried the Squire, in a triumphant tone, as the grooms and helpers brought forward the dogs, twelve in number, all strictly coupled up, and all bounding and leaping, with a ferocious force that put to the test the whole strength and management of the men who held them in leash.

“There they are—look at them—what do you think of them?” exclaimed the Squire, his face beaming with proud delight.

And all the party did look at and examine them carefully, but with a shuddering feeling as they growled and bellowed in hoarse, deep-mouthed tones, as soon as they caught the scent of the blood that had here and there dripped from Godroon's clothes, or been left on the gravel by his footprints.

As well as I can now trace the impression made on me by these terrible animals, they appeared unlike any others, even of the motley collection of the Squire's ordinary or regular pack before described. They were, like the others, of various colours, black, red, yellow, brindled, and spotted, but pretty nearly of the same size. They seemed to stand about five-and-twenty inches high, and perhaps forty in length, with head, breast, fore legs, and shoulders, like a light-made mastiff; snout longer; ears erect, like a grey-hound; and loins, croup, haunches, and tail also of greyhound shape only thicker set—the combination indicating great nerve, strength, and agility. As they strove to escape from the muscular men who held them, their eyes flashed, they actually roared with rage, and twisted like serpents while the men lashed them severely with

heavy-thonged whips. They became quite frantic with impatience, and several of them turned to bite or tear the hands that curbed them. The Squire seemed boiling with fierce ardour. He held his watch in his hand, his eyes straining as he counted the minutes, and at last he exclaimed,—"The quarter of an hour is passed—now mount, whoever means to follow me. Lead on the horses."

We all sprang into our saddles; he was as usual lifted into his. No one but he spoke a single word. There was an air of compressed excitement in every face around me—and I have no doubt every frame thrilled nervously, with a feeling akin to terror, which all strove to conceal. We were embarked in a fearful adventure. But being in for it, and prepared by the night's proceedings, we dashed on like men rushing to a breach or charging a battery.

"Time is up," bellowed the Squire at the very top of his now screaming voice—"unloose the couples there on the scent.—Hark forward, away!"

No sooner said than done. Every collar was unclasped. The dogs, like a herd of wild-beasts—indeed they were but such—sprang through the wide-open gate, with a concentrated yell that made us shudder. The horses plunged and reared as if maddened with affright. But we

were all—dogs, horses, men—put on our mettle, and we were soon in the open fields and at full speed on our headlong chase.

Never in all my experience before or since did I witness such a tremendous burst as that. Never saw anything like the pace. Never felt anything like the sensation. Away we went, men and beasts. The dogs ran shoulder to shoulder, not a foot of space dividing one from the rest. They required no guidance or control. They were never a moment at fault. They were in full cry from first to last. The riding was terrific, but splendid. The most torpid pulse, the most sluggish blood would have throbbed and boiled to have witnessed, not to say shared in, such a scene. We were eleven in all. All capitally mounted for our several weights. Every man was well horsed; every horse well manned. The field was prime—and the *game!* where and what was it? I verily believe, shocking as it is to say it, that in two minutes from the start no one thought of that, until the first check brought us a little to our senses.

Within less than a mile of the house, after having cleared some desperate leaps, we came to a trout-stream, not wide and with easy banks. A moment's pause took place. Godroon had evidently crossed safely, but was not to be seen

beyond. Everybody looked forward towards the rath, a weed-covered mound, with a few straggling elm-trees on the top. The dogs seemed for an instant puzzled—and both master and men exchanged words of surprise and anxiety, for it was plain that the too daring “drag” had not taken the direct course for the shelter designated for him by the Squire; but had deviated to the right or left beyond the water to give additional time for “the sport,” as he said he would. Looking round me I saw a riderless horse galloping about. I had no time to ask for the owner, for one of the leading dogs, either sniffing the scent across the stream, or following some instinct awfully like reason which told that the blood-stained feet must have passed to the other side, dashed into the water, followed by all the others, and they were in a minute on the opposite bank and again in full cry.

We all had a fair start and a large majority went cleverly over. The Squire’s horse seemed to go on invisible wings, so beautifully did the rider lift him through the air. I turned round my head and saw two of our party splashing in the water. Who were they? What matter? “Hark forward!” and away we went into a rather thick copse on the right.

“Heavens!” cried some one, “should the

poor fellow have stumbled and fallen in the tangled cover!" A frightful chance, for he would have surely been torn to pieces before any of us could have come close up with the blood-hounds. But we struggled through, the dogs invisible in the brushwood but their music leading us on.

While they doubled and seemed baffled in the intricate covert, Godroon had gallantly worked his way through it, gaining time by many turns, like a close-pressed hare, and we all gave a shout of joy and encouragement as we marked him through an opening, at an easy canter on the rising ground leading up towards the rath. He cut some frolicsome capers, looked quite fresh and at ease with himself, like a man who had done his work well; and he quietly stepped on towards the rath, where he paused, looked round him, and then deliberately climbed into a tree, prepared to survey and enjoy the progress of the hunt and the performances of the huntsmen.

"He's all right," "Safe and sound," "Thank God!" and other exclamations of satisfaction broke from several as we got well out of the thicket and galloped on after the dogs, now lying desperately close on the scent again, and running like the wind. I and all the rest had our eyes fixed while we rode on, as the blood-red figure of

Godroon straddle-legged on the branch which moved flexibly up and down at his motion, and seemed to keep time with the chorus of the pack. Suddenly we were shocked on seeing the branch snap and break right across between the trunk of the tree and Godroon, and down he fell to the ground and rolled bodily over the other side of the rath, being instantly lost to our view.

What cared the blood-hounds? View or no view was all the same to them. They, like sailors steering by the needle, had the unerring scent of their unseen victim on grass and bramble, weed and shrub, and onward they went always in deep full cry. And on we pushed with whip and spur at our horses' utmost speed, to gain the top of the rath and cross it in good time if possible, to save the poor fellow before his savage pursuers could consummate his now almost apparent doom.

The dogs were first on the summit ; and still yelling in fearful harmony they seemed to drop over in a compact mass to the far off side of the mound before we could gain the top. What a terrible few minutes of suspense it was, and with what dread we strained our eyes forward when we got fairly up, expecting to see the blood-hounds tearing the mangled body of what we now felt to be *our* victim as well as that of the ferocious

beasts. Great and indescribable was our joy—I am sure we all felt alike—to mark the crimson fugitive bounding along still some hundreds of yards in advance; but every action showed that he was now running for his life with almost superhuman speed.

To the right and left and before him there was not a vestige of shelter to be seen, a bleak common covered with light grass, here and there a tuft of rank herbage, and large blocks of stone as if thrown at random about—such was the dreary and despairing prospect. Poor Godroon seemed to feel the horror of his situation for his head was frequently turned back, to measure no doubt the decreasing distance between him and us. He was going straight in the direction of Slievenamora—the only object rising from the wide-spread plain, and offering the only possible chance of escape, could he hold his breath and keep up the rapid pace for a mile or more further. The horses scrambled with great difficulty through the scattered blocks and over the many crevices which now broke the ground. There were two or three heavy falls of beasts and men. The dogs gained on us every moment. We did our best to keep steady hands, and hold our horses well up; and “the field,” now reduced to seven, formed a gloomy contrast in their silent anxiety to the

bounding elasticity of spirit with which men follow hounds who are hunting natural game. A couple of hares sprang up before the dogs. We hoped this might have turned them aside, changing the scent. They never seemed to heed them, more than a well-bred setter would heed a lark, with a pack of grouse or a running covey of partridges before him. Our dogs required a higher flavour. Blood, blood was their only instinct.

At last Godroon was rising the rugged base of the mountain; the dogs closing fast on him; and we in utter despair of pushing our horses up through the crags in anything like time to drive them off. "He'll do it! The witch's tree will save him! said the Squire to Keeravan in a confident tone.

"How will the crayture ever climb the trunk without a screed of bark on it?" asked the huntsman with a gloomy look.

"He'll scramble up somehow—life is sweet, and strength and activity can do anything," replied the Squire as we still worked our way. But the meaning of these observations was lost on me, for I had never then seen the locality I described in my opening sketch.

The next change in the scene was Godroon's gaining the summit, and rushing over it and out of our sight without a moment's pause.

"This way, your Honour, this way," shouted Shamus Bawn, beckoning with his whip towards a patch of greensward running like a narrow ribbon up the rocky pass, and allowing us to gallop one by one with rather greater speed than the dogs, who followed steadily Godroon's windings through the obstructing crags. Had he discovered the smoother path which the whipper-in struck upon, they would have infallibly caught him up, even before they did, on such comparatively easy ground.

We gained the summit, and at a couple of hundred yards' distance caught a view of the lake, the blasted tree, and Godroon making fruitless efforts to climb to the overhanging branches. There was not a notch or knot, or the least projecting thing to give place for even one foot to rest on; and he only slipped down again and again after every attempt to cling to the worn and wasted trunk.

We were now all, horses men and dogs, pell-mell together rushing at full speed towards him, the blood-hounds roaring with incredible fury having the victim almost in their fangs, we all shouting at once to him,

"The water! the water! Plunge in, plunge in!"

"Oh God! He can't swim a stroke," exclaimed

the Squire in agony. And we all in this supreme moment dashed among the dogs, striving to ride them down or batter them to death with our hammer-handled whips. They were actually on him. He turned round and round bewildered and giving himself up for lost. It was a frightful spectacle. My eyes closed—and when they opened again convulsively I saw the desperate wretch with maniac bound fling himself into the lake.

In an instant every one of the ravenous dogs not disabled by our blows leaped in after him—and riders and horses all were as quickly in the waves—into which the commotion lashed the liquid depths.

I cannot now accurately, for I did not then, clearly comprehend the final close of this drama. Reason was in abeyance, every one acted on impulse. It all tended one way—to recover the body, before the hideous animals tore it limb from limb. The efforts of some—or all—I know not how it was, were successful. The dogs were beaten and baffled, and forced to loose hold of the prey they no doubt thought they had earned a right to devour. The dripping form of the disfigured “drag,” the gory stains half-washed from the clothes, was lifted up on the horse of the whipper-in, who held it nearly upright before the saddle. We urged on our animals to a fast walk,

looks of awe on every face, and not a word uttered by any one. We made our way to the narrow path by which we had mounted. There never was a more horror-struck procession, the water streaming down from each man, and the blood curdling in every vein.

Towards the base of the mountain we were met by several of the stable and kennel men with a light cart carrying the leather couplings, chains, and muzzles of the odious dogs, who now sneaked beside or after us, crest-fallen, hungry, and vindictive, their blood-shot eyes and an occasional dismal growl speaking their angry discontent.

A halt was commanded by the Squire. Shamus and one of the new comers lifted the senseless form—a harrowing sight—from the horse into the cart.

“Oh, murther, Master! murther!” cried Shamus, in a tone of terror, “it’s groaning, Sir, it’s groaning!”

The Squire pressed forward. “Five pounds for you, Shamus, if you speak truth!” said he.

“It’s true, it’s true enough!” exclaimed Keeravan, with less agitation. “He’s moving!”

“Ten pounds for you, Keeravan, for the news! Stand back, boys, give him air. Yes, God be thanked, he’s still alive!”

“Alive!” echoed every voice; and every heart

throbbed wildly at the word. And it was indeed so. And recovery was indisputable and magically quick. The wild opening of the lids—the wandering and still fear-stricken gaze, the nervous motion of the lips, the half-choked utterance of the first words, the spasmodic flinging up of the arms, the clasped hands, the upturned eyes—what a picture for memory to dwell on !

How long did this awful man-hunt with bloodhounds last ? What time was consumed from the start until what was so nearly being the—death ? I know not. Very brief no doubt in *the run*, but well I recollect that that fearful course appeared at the time as though it had been an age. And now, in retracing it here, hurriedly and with a flying pen, it passes at once before me like a lightning-flash.

We were soon housed at Knockderrig, and revelling in the delight of warm baths, dry clothes, roaring fires, and such a breakfast ! Nature would assert its rights, and appetite came wildly back for “its own.” We all felt that we had passed though a great exploit—nothing heroic in it—but a feat perhaps without a parallel. And it was so beautiful to see poor resuscitated Godroon, so nearly sacrificed for our mad pleasure, clean washed, well dressed, smiling languidly and kindly—I might say forgivingly on us, though

we had not in our revelry meant him any harm—that I think after all the scene was worth going through, remembering, and recording.

When hunger was appeased, and every duty performed to the chief actor and the subordinate attendants, by a not ungenerous subscription, either in cash or in promises sure to be fulfilled, the Squire in his most impressive manner addressed us.

“Gentlemen,” said he, with some few other phrases which I forget, “we have escaped a great crime. Had that poor fellow perished, I had been assuredly a murderer, and all of you, by my instigation, accessories in the fact. I don’t know how the law might have dealt with us, for though there was no malice prepense there was certainly folly aforethought, and many a violation of right is committed under the excuse of want of reflection.

“However, it is over—and we have had a great escape. Only one act of justice, and propriety, and humanity remains to be fulfilled. I’m sure you all hate those diabolical dogs that a strange infatuation made me import from the West Indies to lead you and me into temptation. Don’t you hate them?”

A tremendous chorus of “Yes! all! all!” followed the question.

“They are no use on the face of this earth,” continued the Squire. “The money they cost me for a mere whim has been quite thrown away. The few times I went out with some of them before this dreadful morning led me into a great mistake. I thought it was good sport. It was very exciting—and such as it was, it was a new pleasure. Godroon was so active, so prudent and so lucky on those occasions, that the run from here to the rath was but a joke. I never dreamt of a breaking branch, nor he neither. Yet you see on how little the life of a man depends and an age of remorse! Gentlemen, we have all had a great escape. Now come with me to the kennel yonder, and be witnesses to the best atonement I can make for what is past, and the best security I can give for the future. Are the guns all loaded?”

“They are, your Honour, with two bullets in every barrel,” said Keeravan.

“All right! Wheel me out.”

And out he was wheeled accordingly, and out we all went along with him; and in five minutes a volley from the united force of the household (except Godroon, who said “he had no malice against the poor bastes”) laid the whole pack dead on the kennel floor, with the exception of one which was killed by a blow from a whip-

handle, and another that was strangled by what poor Godroon declared he thought was his own death-grasp, in the lake of Moonavallah.

When we were all mounted, and taking our leave of Knockderrig, a couple of hours later, the last words of our most strange, eccentric, and very remarkable host, were—

“God bless ye all, my good friends! and remember I now reckon on ye all, as men of honour and gentlemen—without asking any pledge—not to mention to any one a hint of this adventure by word of mouth or by pen for five years from this day.”

We all solemnly promised, and I hope every one kept his word. I have at any rate kept mine; for it is only now—exactly forty years beyond the five to which my discretion was limited—that I have first narrated this instance of the wild sports of Ireland, in what was comparatively the olden time.

CHAPTER V.

THE DAMP TAILOR OF DHULOUGH,

AN IRISH REVIVAL.

IN a deep recess, scooped by the ocean among the rocks of the wild southern coast of Ireland, lies Dhulough, the Black Lake; so dark and dull that the mind of the gazer into its waters seems steeped in gloom, while fancy instinctively fathoms its depths, for some memorial of guilt or superstition. It is the very place for a murder or a ghost story.

The mountain rises abruptly from the edge of this slough, the base being huge misshapen cliffs, the summit bleak and desert moorland, where the grouse are comparatively tame and the hares no longer timid, in the safeguard of the surrounding desolation. The only sign of movement is the roll of the whelming surge beating against the crags, which, as the tide recedes, seem to rush angrily after the repulsed and broken

waves, until the next billowy invasion appears to drive them up inland again—an illusion of elementary action and re-action, somewhat analogous to the celebrated *Fata Morgana*, so common on the Irish coast.

Buried in a hollow above the lake is a straggling hamlet composed of wretched cabins. Close by is a small chapel, and near it a graveyard of the rudest appearance, no monument or up-raised tombstone proclaiming the pride of family or mocking the vanity of man. A few rugged slabs of granite with uncouth carving mark the resting-places and record the names of the departed; and a withered rose-tree or stunted holly-bush, here and there, tells that love, tender though primitive, has planted its tribute on the mound, seven feet by three, the posthumous territory of the dead. Even here the affections assert their supremacy over ignorance, poverty, and semi-barbarism.

But a little way up-shore, there is a substantial evidence of civilization. A stone-built dwelling-house which, in comparison with the hovels of the hamlet, might be called a mansion, with its offices, gardens, and incipient shrubberies, give an air of sheltered refinement to the scene. The smoke, thick-curling from the kitchen chimney at all seasons, tells of good cheer and plenty. That sure signal of hospitality appears to the wayfarer

like a floating flag of welcome, which is amply realized within to him who claims refreshment and repose, on the score of regular introduction or plain-speaking want. Guest and beggar are alike well cared for, according to the difference of degree, but the sliding-scale of entertainment is not so slippery as to make any new-comer feel insecure of the footing on which he stands.

The domestic establishments in such remote districts are usually very irregular. Well-trained servants dislike the isolation, even more than they do the companionship of the rough kerns who fill the inferior offices of the household. A polished butler, or fashionable lady's-maid, is ill at ease with such associates, and they keep them as much as possible at arm's-length. Thus the rude servitors are left very much in their native coarseness, snubbed, if not altogether ignored, by their "betters," and they often work themselves up to a proud antagonism with the supercilious airs they hate, but cannot quite succeed in despising.

Be this as it may, there never, I believe, existed a more genuine specimen of unmitigated ignorance than Bridget Behan, a temporary hanger-on about the house above alluded to. How she ever happened to become its inmate, transplanted from her original hut, I do not know. Why she was retained in it, I do not care. But I believe it

was all from a sentiment of pure benevolence on the part of her protectress and my most amiable and accomplished hostess, the mistress of the mansion.

The clumsy nymph, the object of so much consideration, being far too coarse for any duty of personal attendance, seemed to be retained merely that she might gain a title to a few months' "character," to enable her to obtain a less desultory position elsewhere, such as waiting-maid to a cow or a couple of young calves, or perhaps as superintendent of some populous pigsty. But she frustrated all such kind intentions on her behalf, after an interval of awkward uneasiness and unexplained discontent, by one day abruptly announcing to "the Misthress" that "she had made up her mind to emigrate to America with the rest of her people"—meaning her whole family connections of the same blood persons of that class which, being of poverty—prepense at home, and instigated by a longing for independence abroad, are easily coaxed into transportation for life, often by inducements less stringent than those which now hurried all the members of the clan Behan into voluntary expatriation.

Bridget's mistress was somewhat unpleasantly surprised at this announcement, and rather startled

by her manner. The enormous decrease of the population by the rushing "exodus," as it was the fashion to call this continuous transatlantic movement, had begun seriously to annoy the gentry and all who wished to keep "hands" plenty and labour cheap. But the usual air of the emigrant class preparatory to departure was gay, hopeful, and indeed enthusiastic, compared to the downcast look of Bridget Behan, and the doleful tone of her voice.

The "Misthress," well knowing the sensitive astuteness of the peasantry she was surrounded by, gave no expression to her real feelings. She evinced neither displeasure nor astonishment, but uttered some encouraging words of approval for the wholesale judgment and discretion of the family at large, and only hinted her regret at Bridget herself abandoning her home for such a distant land.

"Ah, Ma'am," replied she, "but Amerikee's such a fine counthry. They say the pigs run wild about the sthreets, and the carpenters gets five shillings a day and three males of mate."

The "Misthress" smiled; not incredulously, but because she didn't exactly see how pig-hunting or carpenters' work affected Bridget's personal interests, and she certainly had as many meals of meat daily at Dhulough as she chose to consume.

“Then, Ma’am,” continued Bridget with increasing animation, “Amerikee’s a free counthry, and people can do whatever they like in it.”

“Do you think so, Bridget? Are crimes never punished there?”

“Why, if they was, Ma’am, what’d be the use of crossing the broad Atlantic, and goin’ to a free counthry? Shure one can be good anywhere.”

The Misthress, who had read and heard of the severe prison discipline of the United States, and of the facilities afforded to Irishmen and “Niggers” for getting hanged in that free (and easy) country, only hoped, for the sake of Bridget and her kith and kin, that she might not be too painfully mistaken in her calculations; but, from the overdone anxiety of this poor girl to give plausible reasons for her self-banishment, the Misthress aforesaid was certain that some mysterious cause was in the background, or buried in the heart of her too diplomatic dependant.

“Well Ma’am, indeed an’ its true enough for you, an’ there *is* another raison for our all going over the say, beyant the beyants—and a strong raison too—an’ one that your Honour’s riverence would run away from like the rest of us if you knew what it was Ma’am—an’ drayry an’ cowl’d and disagreeable it is, an’ enough to frighten the life out of any dacent people—an’ one that all

the salt wather in Dhulough wouldn't wash away, barrin' the whole of the Behans, man woman an' child of us, was to lave the place to him to air himself in, and be quiet again an' not dhrive us all mad intirely wid fright—an' it's none of our fault afther all, only jist a joke of owld Uncle Tim's, an' what no Christian craythur but an O'Toole, an' they're always the same dead or alive, would be spiteful enough to dhrive an honest family to—"

"But what," asked the somewhat bewildered lady, "what is the real cause of you and your relations going off so suddenly to America? Do stop crying and talking so fast, Bridget, and tell me the truth."

"Well Ma'am then it's nawthin' but God's truth that I tell you, an' sorrow's the raison we have but only a damp tailor—which manes savin' your Ladyship's Honour's presence, an' I hope your Ladyship will forgive me, the ghost of a damp tailor, bad scratch to him!"

My friend, the lady recipient of this startling and conglomerated revelation, assured me that her blood ran cold, and a chill sense of shivering rushed through her frame, when Bridget, casting a look of terror over the lady's shoulder, seemed to fix her distended eyes on some hideous object behind her back. The lady was actually afraid to

turn her head and look round, and ashamed to betray the superstitious thrill to the pale-faced and trembling girl. Assuming composure, though she had it not, but with a coolness quite appropriate to her state of physical feeling, she desired Bridget to sit down, and indeed helped to place her on a chair, the first she had ever occupied in such a presence. And thus, in awkward agitation, feeling herself to be the wrong girl in the wrong place, and after much kindly encouragement on the part of her mistress, she stammered out a nearly incoherent recital of the supernatural event, illustrative of her terror and the family sufferings, all of which was condensed by my fair informant into the following short but ower-true tale.

In the parish which owns the little chapel before alluded to and the piece of land attached to it, where the peasantry bury their relations and friends when they reach the only quiet period of an Irishman's existence, his death—the name of the parish is luckily not material, for it has escaped my memory, but no doubt it begins with a “Knock” or a “Kil,” and where the local politics are characteristically tranquillized by the arguments indicated in those ominous syllables—the neighbouring families have by the simple process of appropriation, in America called

“squatting,” acquired a right of sepulture in a particular spot of the sacred ground, to the limited extent indicated by liberal measurement for each of them in the opening pages of this historical sketch.

First among those families for comparative respectability, and a competency which may by courtesy be called wealth, were the Behans. Chief of the contrasting residents were the O'Tooles, wild, reckless, poor, and amorous, from generation to generation; notorious among the scanty population for unduly and sometimes illegally increasing it, first in the faction fights, last in the labour-market; better known to the police than the *clergy*, oftener in the station-house than at the chapel; enlisting one day, deserting the next, poaching on shore, smuggling at sea; idle fishermen, lazy labourers; yet withal gay, agreeable, sociable fellows, fond of fun, fonder of whiskey, fondest of the girls. Such they were and had been from father to son, as far back as the oldest of the oldest inhabitants could tell, or as was told by their fathers, and their fathers' fathers before them.

It's very strange how this moral—or immoral—likeness runs like a physical resemblance through families from time immemorial! But we mustn't stop to get too deep into the inquiry, though the

fact may be found germane to the matter we have in hand.

Well, as I was saying—or going to say, which comes to the same thing, provided what is to be said is said at last—old Barney Behan, one of the patriarchs of that same family, who lived convenient to and within eyeshot of the collection of *post-obit* freeholds commonly called the graveyard, died one day, and therefore he hadn't far to be taken to his "last resting-place," as the final underground terminus is poetically called. Barney Behan was in due form stretched, and waked, and howled at, and fought over; and he received numerous other attentions suitable to the melancholy occasion—in short he "went to glory" with all the usual Irish honours.

In less than a year afterwards one of the O'Tooles paid his personal instalment of the great debt of nature, being only a trifle more than a tithe of what is exacted from men in general, for Terence O'Toole being a tailor, his share was naturally only the ninth part of what would be the proportion due by any other male individual of his family. When his thread of life was clipped, and his legs uncrossed by his friends and his breast crossed by the priest, and all the customary ceremonials performed, he was laid in a grave—but unfortunately it was not *his* grave at

all, but one he had no business to intrude himself into. His too impatient kinsfolk, in their hurry to get rid of the dear defunct, had blundered the business most completely, for by some topographical mistake they put him into one of the family graves of the Behans, indeed it was no other than that very one where poor old Barney had been deposited, about the same day of the same month the preceding year.

The Behans very soon got wind of this unprecedented, and I might almost say unparliamentary, proceeding—for no member of either House has a right to fall asleep, much less to bury himself, on the body of another, however stupid the speeches of whatever “party” may be addressing the empty benches, or the (other) unhappy “speaker,” *id est* the one *par excellence* who rarely or never speaks. But this is only by way of illustration or parenthesis, and has nothing to do with the interpolation of the body of O’Toole the tailor under the sacred mound that covered the remains of several of the Behans, in general, and those of old Barney Behan in particular.

The surviving kinsmen (and kinswomen) of their deceased relative, were much incensed at the tailor’s aggression, albeit it was none of his fault. But little they cared for that. They were never over-scrupulously just to the rival clan

during life (though their hatred did not go the lengths of the Corsican *vendetta*) and it was not to be expected they should be more so to the dead. They thought—and so do people in general, let them say or quote what they may—that *nil nisi bonum* is a mere rhetorical figure, a kind of philanthropical flourish, *vox et præterea nihil*, an absurd restriction on freedom of speech. They therefore exploded in unmeasured invectives against the audacity of the departed snip, and to whatever atmospheric influence they might have denounced his soul, they determined to expose his body to what might be called a very opposing element. So down they came that very same night, to do their deed of darkness, and with pick-axes and shovels in their hands, like so many wolves or vampires, or any other unclean birds of prey, they proceeded to tear open the jaws of the grave and force it to disgorge the coffin it had so recently swallowed, proving that “the last resting-place” was indeed a singularly poetical and inappropriate phrase in its latest application.

“Shure what dacent corpse would like to have a journeyman tailor lying cross-legged atop of him?” asked elderly Tim Behan of his next of kin as they paused for a minute or two in their sacrilegious work; and there was a sort of sarcastic sneer in his tone and look which half-justified

Bridget in calling the transaction "a joke of owld Uncle Tim's." But joke or earnest whichever it was—and perhaps it was half one and three parts the other (Irish reckoning) the body-snatchers tilted the obnoxious spalpeen, after dragging him out of his coffin, straight up against the chapel wall; and filling in the doubly outraged sepulchre they left the stark, and almost stark naked, body standing, like some grim sentry that had died suddenly on his post, exposed to the deluge of rain which drove them scampering to their uneasy beds in the cabins close by.

Now, without wishing to interrupt the rushing interest of the narrative, by any moral reflections or other unpalatable devices of those who want to spin out a story, I must say that however justifiable the removal of Terence the tailor, as necessary for the comfortable repose of his predecessor in the cold earth, might have been, the exhumed and obnoxious "craythur" should certainly have been reinterred somewhere or other, and not left, a standing menace against all Dhulough, as the "Equilateral" is against Lombardy, Garibaldi against despotism, or the half million of the French standing army against the world at large. The neglect of that act of civilization was one of those sins of omission which was sure to bring some of the village filibusters to grief, if not

actually to condign punishment, in consideration perhaps of the unburied tailor's merely fractional claims to the recognized rights of man, dead or alive.

That very night arose a fearful storm, in the composition of which every known ingredient of a tempest was extensively served up. Houses rocked, beds shook, doors creaked, and windows were forced from their frames; the whole hamlet of Dhulough was frightened from its propriety, like the body of that older Hamlet which on a memorable occasion "burst its cerements." The thatch of many a cabin was whirled high in the air, the crop of many a potato-garden laid low on earth—the pitiless storm pelted away unmercifully in, through, and over everything—the lightning blazed, the thunder crashed—nobody slept, everybody prayed, during many a terrible hour. Now I don't mean to assert that there was any supernatural connection with this elemental disturbance and the quasi-sacrilege which had been enacted so recently, any more than the similar symptoms which followed Julius Cæsar's assassination, or preceded the murder of Duncan. It might all have been only a coincidence, as the phrase goes; but at any rate it was a very uncomfortable one for the poor cottiers, whose unroofed huts left them exposed to the drenching

rain, and for none more so than Tim Behan, who when morning dawned looked furtively out of his burst-open window, scarcely expecting to see anything more evident than doomsday anticipated or chaos come again.

What then was his horror to discover the unsepulchred, uncoffined, and uncereclothed tailor, standing stiff against the chapel wall, thoroughly soaked with the rain, his former wooden covering in fragments, and portions of it strewn about by the unscrupulous winds !

Tim Behan—as all husbands, even the worst-behaved of them, do in perplexity—called loudly for advice and comfort from his wife ; and Peggy—as all wives, even the worst-used of them generously do in their tyrants' extremity—kindly administered hers.

“ Go out, Tim, directly,” said she coaxingly, “ put a dry shirt on the poor corpse, and get his people to bury him at once, no matter in whose grave so it's consecrated ground ;” for well she knew that it was a point of honour with an Irish ghost to get immediate satisfaction for any indignity offered to its body after death.

Well, to make a long story short, this womanly and wife-like advice was taken and acted on, the shirt was donned, the tailor again made subterrastrial, and that benevolent and lucky change

of linen—or cotton as the case might be—was believed to be the reason for Tim Behan's wife being to a certain degree an exception to the general persecution that subsequently befell every other living soul of the family, not excepting Tim himself, who was nothing better than a spinning-jenny or any other bit of machinery that carries out the ideas of some great inventive genius.

In one word, the ghost of the damp tailor incontinently commenced a regular “airing” of the Behan family; walking, eating, drinking, and sleeping by turns, first with one, then with another, never giving notice of his coming nor waiting to be asked, always an uninvited, unwelcome, and very unwholesome guest.

For several months not one of the Behans, barring Mrs. Tim, was believed to have escaped the characteristic, and (in)delicate attentions of the vindictive ghost. Rheumatism it was said ran through the family; neuralgia likewise, though they didn't know the name of it; they shook with the ague; they suffered from cold perspirations; and sundry pains and aitches, according to John Kemble's pronunciation and Prospero's prescription, turned the clan into so many imitations of a tribe of Shaking Quakers.

One night, very dark and windy, Phelim Be-

han coming home from the shebeen-shop fell over the cliff and was drowned, (dying of whiskey and water,) and no doubt was entertained but that the Damp Tailor gave him a push or a shove. The O'Tooles suggested that Phelim had been spirit-rapping or spirit-sipping, rather too freely. But that theory was indignantly rejected by the sceptic Behans, who vowed that "the mortal likeness of Terry O'Toole the tailor, as he lived, was seen to dog the victim to the very edge of the precipice."

One of the haunted wretches reckoning on his very distant connection with the offending branch of the Behans ventured to marry, "and small blame to him for that same," said his friends, "for sure it was only comfort that Maurice Behan wanted." But that was precisely what he was destined not to obtain. Mrs. Maurice Behan his wife was from the wedding night seriously obstructed and inconvenienced in her somnolent arrangements. No sooner had she given herself up to slumber than she was aroused by a clammy and splashy sensation, as if somebody with wet feet were walking across her chest. She at first suspected this for a vagary of Maurice. But when more accustomed to his ways she knew better than that; and on other occasions she coldly felt the intrusive feet stepping across her to her husband's side

of the bed ; and she could soon distinctly hear a second breathing in a rather more subdued key than Maurice's accustomed snore ; while she was "made sinsible" of a dampness in the upper sheet, and a steaming earthy kind of odour like that of a new-made grave.

Maurice for some time combated these notions as fancies of a disordered brain, but he was soon forced to confess himself equally a victim to the fact of being "aired" by the Damp Tailor. Maurice's mother-in-law was very angry at the unfortunate fate her daughter had married into, as might be said, and a regular "ruction" between the two families, their friends and followers, was the consequence.

At length the persecuted Behans were forced to call in the aid of the parish priest, which they would have done from the first had he not been himself one of the O'Tooles. But driven into a corner as it were, they made a bargain with him, and paid him a handsome price to lay the Damp Tailor, or at any rate to hang him out to dry on something or other. And the reverend Father Pat very soon assured them that he had succeeded, one moonlight night, in catching the shadowy culprit as he was stealing like a moonbeam out of his grave, and exorcizing him, and pinning him down in purgatory snug and safe. And so the

persecutions of the Behans really did cease for some months. But the old priest, Father Pat, suddenly died, and then good-bye to the comfort of the Behans. It was not considered certain whether the priest had only a life interest in the purgatorial banishment of the Damp Tailor. But on his decease the resuscitated vagrant returned to his old pranks, made renewed visitations to his former victims, and was decidedly more damp and disagreeable than ever.

The new father and his coadjutor were applied to for their good offices, but the Behans found that the value of exorcisms had "riz," and they could not at all come up to the new price-current of purgatory. The worn-out and half-crazy family became desperate. Their case was the common talk; and a philanthropic emigrant-agent advised the "aired" victims, one and all, to put an end to their terrible connection with the Damp Tailor by going bodily off to America, since no phantom, male or female, dare attempt to cross the "big sea," every country beyond it being therefore out of the bounds of their jurisdiction. The Behans heard this advice, pondered on it, and after due deliberation they determined to act on it. And thus it was that the whole family, as Bridget truly and duly informed her mistress, had quite made up their minds, and very nearly packed up their

trunks, boxes, and other conveyances, to carry themselves and their belongings from the Old World to the New.

But!—ah, those wonderful buts! There was in this matter as in most others a crisis! Ah, those critical, providential, world-saving crises! Just as all was nearly completed, and the family sacrifice on the point of being consummated, young Dennis O'Toole, first cousin-german (as he was called) to the identical Damp Tailor—one of the most scampish of the same scampish family, a fellow who was never known to do anything but mischief, but without any malice in it, a practical joker—the most practised and best practical joker of the whole lot of O'Tooles—a regular dare-devil, fearing neither man nor beast, but finding somehow or other “entertainment” in both one and the other; this audacious and, since I must speak plain, most impudent reprobate, dashed suddenly in upon the whole assembled gathering of the emigrating Behans, the very day before they were to take their departure in the ship from Cork, and without a blush, or an apology, or a plea for forgiveness, he burst out laughing, and confessed that it was he who had all along personated and parodied the deceased Terry, called by courtesy the Damp Tailor, taking advantage of the strong family likeness, and being about the age of his

aforesaid cousin when he gave up the Ghost—an example which he, Dennis, was now in the act of following, but in a less fatal way—and after describing in detail the various tricks and transformations he had adopted for the successful carrying out of his performance on so many occasions, the way he used to steal into the open-door cabins, his chance walk close by poor Phelim Behan the drowned one, his confession to good-natured Father Pat who had let him off “aisey” on the slight penance of dropping his tricks for awhile—he unreservedly offered himself as a willing victim for any punishment the Behans might choose to inflict on him.

They were furious at first. They swore terribly. They threatened violently. But they hadn’t the heart after all to do anything seriously cruel to such a good-humoured and self-convicted culprit. They couldn’t help (what Irishman or woman could?) liking the joke even at their own expense. They were all very glad to stay at home, instead of going out on the long voyage they had projected. They resolved to unpack their things, abandon their plans, and remain in Old Ireland, and at the suggestion of shrewd old Tim—or I rather believe of that wily and clever temporizer his wife—it was resolved to adopt young Dennis O’Toole as one of themselves, the best way of

neutralizing his tormenting tendencies; and as he couldn't be transformed altogether into an actual Behan, the next best thing to be done was to tack a Behan to him. And the great mystery and my little story come to an end together in the fact—an important *tertium quid*—that Dennis O'Toole was positively and irrevocably married—to whom do you think? Why to no other than our apparently uninteresting young friend, Bridget Behan, to whom he had been long desperately attached on the sly—for she was a very pretty, plump, rosy bit of a girl (which I didn't think it necessary to mention before)—and this attachment was the great reason of her grief at being on the point of going off to America before she knew Dennis's other secret, and the real cause of his betraying it, and putting a stop at the last moment to the movement that would have carried his sweetheart across “the broad Atlantic,” and, probably lost her to him for ever.

CHAPTER VI.

A REGIMENT OF VOLUNTEERS.—A SIX-WEEKS' VOYAGE TO ENGLAND.—THE IRISH SEA.—A SECOND JONAH.—A VICTIM SAVED.—A MUTINY QUELLED.—ESCAPE FROM SHIPWRECK.

It was while the regiment was encamped in the Phoenix Park near Dublin that we unanimously, officers and men, embraced the permission, conveyed to us by the General commanding, to volunteer our services for England and Scotland. We went much further in our zeal, for we offered to extend them to Portugal and Spain, where so many of our young fellows were from time to time drafted into regiments of the Line. But Government preferred taking us individually and in dribblets to the wholesale style which we wished and petitioned for.

But the change from one island to another was better than remaining fixed in our native land, and the excitement of the days preceding our breaking up from the camp and embarking was considerable. There were three other Irish

regiments, forming with ours a strong brigade in camp, and dispatched at the same time with us, in the same fleet and under the same convoy.

It was a gay and stirring sight as we marched from the ground, and through the city, with bands playing and blue ribbons, the volunteering emblem, flaunting from our caps. The whole population turned out to cheer us, and we took possession of the transport ships prepared for us in the river, with the ardour of an expeditionary force destined for some foreign shore. And such in fact was England to most of us. There was no national sympathy between the countries; prejudices ran high; intercourse was infrequent; and ignorance was abounding and wide-spread.

We embarked on the last day of August, and we reckoned on a quick and quiet passage to our different ports of destination. That chosen for our regiment was Harwich, Colchester being our intended head-quarters. But a dead calm set in, and we had scarcely attempted to move when we were forced, from want of the slightest puff of wind, to cast anchor in the harbour of what is now called Kingston, but which then bore the name of Dunleary. For three weeks we lay listless on the waters, a time of entire idleness, passed in boating, swimming, fishing, shooting sea-gulls, and making excursions to the various

islands and points of scenery in that beautiful old bay of Dublin, famous for herrings and haddocks, the hill of Howth, and its rather imaginative resemblance to the Bay of Naples.

The little brig I was on board of was inconveniently crowded to accommodate the better part of two companies, consisting of a captain, four subalterns (of whom I was the senior in date though not in years), one hundred and ten rank and file, with several sergeants, not less than eighty women, and full as many children of all ages. How such a mass of married people could have been permitted on board of one small vessel with their innumerable family parties I cannot imagine. The whole arrangement seemed modelled on that of a slaver for the middle passage. It was among the amazing marvels of military maladministration not peculiar to those remote times, for things quite as strange, though perhaps not quite analogous, have been acted by the "authorities" on very recent occasions.

On the 21st of September a delicious north-west breeze sprang up, all sails were set, all anchors weighed; and the fleet of fifteen or sixteen transports obeying the signal-gun from the sloop-of-war our convoy, got under way and were soon far out in the channel. On we went merrily before the wind, full of enjoyment, and

in the highest spirits. The landsmen now, in large majorities, at sea for the first time, cared little from what point the wind was blowing so as it filled the sails and sent us onwards. They never thought of the season; nor did they inquire why the sailors looked grave and some of them anxious, when the sun went down in dark-rolling masses of clouds tinged with crimson. The excitement continued as long as daylight lasted. Merry groups of both sexes lingered about the decks, exchanged salutes and jokes with the several vessels that kept close together on the same course; and being now quite domesticated after weeks of shipboard life, they all settled for the night as they had on the previous one in Dublin harbour.

But before morning dawned experience opened on them an entirely new state of things. The wind had shifted in one sudden gust from north to south-west, and the pleasant breeze became a stiff gale. The smooth water was lashed into angry waves. Sickness, that most hateful price paid for "a sea change," attacked five-sixths of the living cargo, and, in short, inverting Gloster's list of illustrations, "merry meetings were changed to stern alarms." Grim-visaged mariners raised their wrinkled fronts;—and the equinoctial storms were upon us, in somewhat premature but inexorable fury.

Driven directly back up the Irish Sea, we were in four-and-twenty hours more far away off the shores of Scotland; and tossing, reeling, and tumbling among the waves, another day and night completely dispersed the fleet; and our clumsy little brig, which was one of those uneasy-minded craft that will neither sink nor swim, was entirely alone, like a forsaken duck bounding on the billows.

For twelve days and nights we were blown to and fro in every possible direction, changing sides of the Irish Sea and up the channel and down again, like the favourite figure of an old country dance. The odious monotony of those days of suffering was almost intolerable, to all those who had nothing to do but watch the mountain waves, and look enviously on the few sailors who had the employment, hard and hazardous as it was, of working the vessel. The only resource for the soldiers to vary the tedium was to take in turns a spell at the pumps, and I found even this an exciting and almost an interesting relief at times.

Many a curious incident occurred during those dreary days on board the several ships, highly illustrative and most amusing, when notes were afterwards compared, to those acquainted with the individual actors. But I doubt if they would

tell in a mere recital without any connection with other traits of character to bring them out into relief. In fact every vessel was a little world, peopled with infinite varieties of our species and affording rich food for remark. The brig that I was on board of had its ample share. My brother-officers were all different from each other, and from me, as I from them, in every distinctive point ; and our captain's wife, the only lady with us, was in herself a subject for serious study of the female mind. The herd of common soldiers and their wives and children offered no doubt great contrasts, but they were, poor creatures ! crowded into a general heap of wretchedness. All forms of discipline were in abeyance. It was impossible to attempt any parades on deck morning or evening ; the messes were all irregular and incomplete, cooking at the one confined caboose being almost impracticable, cleanliness was unattainable, and the appearance of the unwashed and wildly-dressed groups that at times ventured to crawl up on deck was most savage and appalling.

The utter prostration from sea-sickness of the captain commanding the troops threw a good deal of responsibility on me, for I felt it my duty to maintain as much order as was possible under the circumstances, and to show as good an

example as I could to the men, of patience under our privations. They were nearly starved by the extreme difficulty in the way of the steward (who acted as a sort of purser to the transport) when he strove to reach the stores which were nearly submerged by the continual rush of waves through every crevice, through the port-holes, and down the hatchways, perforce occasionally raised to freshen the suffocating atmosphere below though generally battened down, while the dead-lights were constantly closed in the small cabins, occupied by the officers and the little skipper and chief mate who had the onerous charge of the ship and its human freight. As I sat on deck, often lashed to my place, reports were constantly brought to me by the junior subalterns or the sergeants on duty, of the dreadful sufferings of the imprisoned crowd in mid-decks. Want of food, scarcity of even bad water, foul air, and the common accidents of life and death—five children were born and six died during our short but perilous voyage—nearly drove those poor people to despair. I frequently slipped and staggered and groped my way from the raised quarter-deck to the lower regions, to speak some words of condolence and encouragement, and I can most truly record, without any undue flattery toward the sex in general, that it

was among the women I always found the best proofs of endurance, resignation, and courage. The men, in their long loose greatcoats, scant forage caps, and unshaven and cadaverous faces, haggard and brigand-looking, were restrained by habit, and somewhat of personal feeling perhaps, from breaking out into excess in the presence of an officer. But their vociferous imprecations and threats came frequently to my ears when they growled for their rations or allowance of grog, which it was utterly impossible to serve out to them. All this produced serious illness in addition to that more technically designed "sea" sickness; so that with no doctor on board, and a wretched supply of medicine distributed haphazard by the skipper, it may be imagined what we all had to suffer, for assuredly except in the fact of better cabin quarters, officers and men were quite on a par. I forbear from minutely describing our disgusting *nourishment*.

On the evening of the ninth day I was sitting with a young ensign in my usual place on the deck, wet, comfortless, and very unwell, wrapped in my cloak which was drenched with rain and sea-water, the wind blowing in gusts, the sea raging, the ship close-reefed and rolling as if in drunken listlessness to and fro, when my eye caught the view of four or five of the men

coming up towards me from midships, a scared yet desperate expression in their sunken eyes. One of them, the foremost of the group, was more particularly wan and worn in looks. I saw it was Peter Flynn of Company D, who had been for some time far gone in consumption, believed by his comrades and himself a judgment from heaven, for his having about a year previously deliberately fired at and killed a man who had carelessly, but with no really bad intention, pressed against him while he was standing sentry at the gaol of the town where our regiment was quartered. He was tried and acquitted by a court-martial; but even the soldiers as well as his own conscience entered judgment against him, and he was considered a marked man for celestial vengeance, and so he believed himself to be.

"Liftinnant," said one of the men who escorted him as though he had been a prisoner coming out for punishment, "Peter Flynn has a request to make of your Honour."

"Well, Flynn, what is it? I have not much in my power just now?"

"Well, Sir, it's just that I'm a poor forsaken crayture, bringing bad luck to everybody aboard this unfortunate ship, and that I want your Honour's lave, as the Captain isn't to the fore, to

let these men, who cast lots for it, throw me over into the say that's calling out for me, so that the lives of all the rest may be spared."

Each of the four men caught a firm hold of him—his loose coat flew open—and he resigned himself to the executioners, who all glared on him with longing eyes, as though they were fanatical heathen priests, anxious to immolate a victim to their impure gods.

"What do you mean, men?" exclaimed I, starting from my seat to the edge of the quarter-deck below which they stood, and holding by the rigging as I strove to stand steady.

"We mane, Sir," replied one of them "what Peter Flynn says—we want your consint to throw him overboord and save the lives of between two and three hundred men, wimmin, and childer. It's the curse of heaven that's on him. He raised this nine days' storm, and it's not the first time a ship's crew was saved by a man being thrown into the say that's raging to swalley him up."

"What in God's name has put this dreadful nonsense into your heads—are ye all mad?" asked I, myself so shocked and bewildered, that I seemed to have lost my senses with horror.

"Don't call it nonsense, your Honour!" said the condemned man imploringly, "it's nothing but

the will of heaven, Sir. Then for heaven's sake give the word and let it be all over at once, for I want to die and aise my conscience—and save the ship—and wash the blood of that innocent man off my sowl.”

I cannot follow word for word the brief and stirring colloquy, at the very memory of which *my* blood seems to curdle in my veins. It was a desperate scene. The executioners laid stronger hold, and the doomed wretch sprang up that they might with less difficulty heave him into the waves. Several other men now came up on the deck, and in the distance there were the faces of women, their hair dishevelled, and the frenzy of superstitious rage glaring from every eye.

I jumped down into the principal group followed by my young companion, and calling loudly on the soldiers and the skipper, and the ship's company to assist me, I rescued by main force the infatuated suicide from the hands of his murderers—for such he and they all were in intention.

Even in such a moment, the instinctive obedience to authority had its force, and those men who at a word, from their superior, were ready and impatient to act this cruel tragedy, would not do the deed without the sanction which would have justified it to all their ideas of right.

Whilst the poor devil who was anxious to be immolated by the hands of others dared not effect their deliverance by a simple act of self-sacrifice.

The man was saved. But the discontent of the rest was lashed to absolute mutiny. I rallied some of the non-commissioned officers and a few among the less irrational of the men, formed a guard round poor Flynn for the night, and restored something like order. We hoped and prayed that the next day would bring an abatement of the gales—but it came, and the weather seemed if possible worse than ever.

The men were now beyond all the restraint of command; but I must record an instance of the effect of example on even a body of turbulent and half-famished Irishmen, with the law entirely in their own hands. During the scene of the preceding evening, one of the arguments I used against the desperate purpose of Flynn and his fellows, was the chance that the tremendous bad weather might change to fine before morning, and the safety of all on board be secured without the inhuman remedy they proposed. By what I thought a lucky coincidence there was a lull at daybreak, and we saw the English coast quite clear at no great distance to leeward. This raised the spirits of the men and their hopes of

the wind abating, so as to allow of such of the stores as were not entirely spoiled, being reached, the raging hunger appeased, and the every hour increasing illness in some way relieved.

But these were all fallacious calculations. After a little while the tempest resumed its utmost violence and the storm of baffled hope raged more fiercely than ever before. I could not blame the excess, from suffering in which I shared; and when I and the other officers saw the rising commotions that spoke open mutiny we had no possible line to pursue, but to let things take their course. We were all except our utterly overpowered Captain Commandant on deck, and I recommended the others to assume an air of calmness as best they could, and above all things to say nothing to irritate or exasperate the men in their state of incipient frenzy.

The skipper—I so designate him not to confound him by his title of captain with my own superior officer—was indefatigable in his efforts to obtain from the hold of the nearly water-logged vessel such supplies as were at all eatable, from the now small reserve he had contrived to conceal; and as the afternoon wore on he emerged from his place of search, with the steward and others of the crew, carrying up forward sundry baskets containing provisions of some kind. The

barrels of junk were completely submerged, the odious biscuits to which we had been for some days reduced on most short allowance were looked on with repugnance, from their state of living decay. What the baskets could contain was therefore a matter of curiosity and great interest. Groups of the expectant soldiers crowded round when the skipper called them to receive their "rations."

A suppressed murmur and buzz of voices were the first sound that reached me, almost silenced by the whistling and screaming of the wind through the rigging and the scanty spread of canvas. This was immediately followed by a yell, more terrible than the Indian war-whoop. The men frantically dashed the baskets about and scattered their contents into the waves that washed over the deck. A number of the indignant mutineers then seized the skipper and dragged him aft where I was with the other officers, and breaking over all the usual rules of discipline and respect they came up on the quarter-deck; and one of the ringleaders, Cohorn by name, an old soldier who had seen much service in the Line, his face covered with the blue marks of exploded gunpowder, holding the struggling skipper in his powerful grasp with one hand, held out the other close up to my face

and furiously asked, "Is that fit rations for min? Can Christians be traited that way? Look at it, Liftinnint, if you plaze. How would you gintlemin like to be put upon food like that? We'll not bear it any longer!"

"We won't, we won't," shouted the rest. "We'll have our revenge!"

"What do you want?" asked I.

"We want to run the ship ashore—to make this captain do it—to put her head to the land, that we may have something to stop our hunger and famine. Look down there, Sir, at the poor wimmin and childer—see them starvin' and droopin' and dyin' for want of a male's mate, or a handful of praties, or a dhrink of dacent water that's not mud. We'll not bear it—we can't—we must run the ship ashore."

"That would be certain destruction to us all, Cohorn," said I, as calmly as I could.

"So much the bettther—bettther be dashed to pieces at once on the rocks than famished and starved on *rations* like this," replied he, with a bitterly sarcastic emphasis.

"What is that you have in your hand?" asked I.

"I dunna what it is, Sir. This villin of a captain calls it cheese."

"Well, and so it is cheese," chimed in the skipper, struggling to get loose.

"Now what do you think o' that, Liftinnint? *Cheese!* Look at it, Sir."

I did so, and it certainly was as unpalatable-looking a condiment as fancy could picture. Cohorn's dirty hand seemed clean to it. It was black and green and yellow in combination; and, as I took it on my palm it evidently moved from the impulse of some self-engendered machinery of life.

"What man could ait that, Sir, barring the famishing wimmen and the poor childer? It would be nice, wouldn't it, beside the comfortable dinner you have in your cabin there, gintlemin?" said the spokesman ironically.

"You are wrong to say that, Cohorn. We have had nothing for three days past but the decayed biscuit, just like the men."

This was received with an incredulous shake of the head and a grim smile.

"But no officers could ait *that*, and wouldn't if they could," said the ringleader, growing more and more insolent, and looking at his comrades for approval. I saw that something must be done; and at once, to stop if possible the scene, which was rising to a dangerous climax, and might end there was no knowing in what.

"Wouldn't they?" asked I, at the same moment putting the whole piece of filthy corruption

into my mouth, and quietly swallowing every bit, to my own great disgust, and the unbounded astonishment of the beholders.

Now I do not tell this fact for my own glorification, nor do I quite expect to be awarded a niche in history for it, beside heroic men who have given great examples of self-denial or self-sacrifice to the world. But most assuredly the effect produced by my little feat was entirely successful for its object. The men at once, and as if by magic, subsided from their threatening insubordination. They shouted and gesticulated, and thanked me, and asked me to forgive them, and wished long life to me, and swore to a great number of flattering things in my honour—but what was more to the point, they fell upon the scattered baskets, picked up the unsavoury rations, and actually devoured, as though they relished, what a few minutes before they considered it as utterly impossible to taste.

The mutiny was quelled. I went below with the skipper and a few men, broke open with hatchets every barrel that we could come at, and distributed whatever there was of rice or meal, or flour, or any other kind of provision, dividing all that the little skipper had carefully husbanded, share and share alike, with the soldiers and the ship's company, and explained to them clearly

that any squandering or mismanagement of these resources might lead to our actually perishing for want, unless we were providentially able to make some harbour in the channel we were now tossed about in so helplessly.

Two days and nights more brought our misery to a crisis. The main events of this period were the loss of two of the sailors, washed by the waves from the rigging, where they were employed; and the frightful occurrence of another in a fit of madness cutting his throat with a pocket-knife, but so clumsily and imperfectly, as to allow of the blood being quickly staunched, and the wound sewed up by the skipper. He had missed the carotid artery, and had not reached the windpipe. And in all the horror of the scene there seemed a close connection between the dismal and the ludicrous, as I looked down from the companion-stairs into the little den, where the skipper, by the dingy light of a lantern held by the cabin-boy, was performing his semi-surgical operation, spectacles on nose, and plying in no very delicate movement a long, coarse needle, such as is used by sail-makers, taking stitches of proportionate length in the severed flesh of the exhausted sufferer, as though it were a fragment of canvas rent by a storm-gust.

It was now Saturday night, at the conclusion of our second week. The inveterate west wind had at length baffled all the powers of resistance of our brig, and the resources of our crew. Almost every shred of sail was blown to tatters, the rigging was torn and tangled, the ship frequently failed to answer the helm, and the currents were running us fast upon the rock-bound coast of Wales. And harsh and merciless did those rocks seem, frowning on us in the quivering moonlight as we swept past them, for miles and miles, until we entered Cardigan Bay, the clouds flying with us as though we ran together the race of inevitable ruin. And here the final hour seemed each moment ready to toll our death-knell. We were land-locked—there was no escape—to use the nautical illustration of the skipper, we were so close as to be able to chuck a biscuit on the shore—and we every instant expected to strike on some advancing ledge or isolated point of rock. The skipper himself and his mate, a fine, bold seaman, were at last worn out.

“We can do no more, Sir,” said the former to me in answer to a brief inquiry, as the two were poring over the chart, the senseless and ghastly body of the wounded man lying beside them. “I have done my best to save the ship

and lives—it must soon be all over with us. For God's sake, Sir, do you and the other officers persuade your people not to rush to the side on which the ship strikes—it will certainly heave her over, and deprive us of all chance of righting her.”

I went among the soldiers and the women, told them the state of things and the skipper's request, and implored them to be steady and collected when the impending shock was felt. They all behaved admirably. There was neither shrieking nor cursing; but the solemn bearing of thinking beings, who were resolved to meet worthily the doom they could no longer shun.

I felt that I had performed my last duty, and I left the rest to Providence. I was utterly exhausted. For forty or fifty hours I had neither sleep nor rest, and scarcely any sustenance but energetic hope, and the resolve to make to the last the best struggle I could for life.

I spoke a few reassuring words to the only comrade who stood beside me on the deck. I told him, as he could not swim, to stick close to me abide what may, as I was a good swimmer, and that I would hold on to him in any case, and we should either be saved or sink together. I wonder if he remembers the scene and the feelings it ought to have cemented? I have every

reason to believe he is still living. Of the others I have long since lost all trace.

My next notion was to get my military sash out of a trunk to tie round my body, that it might be known for that of an officer and decently buried as *such* if washed ashore—a bit of *almost* posthumous pride, *passez moi le mot*.

Throwing some brief deep thoughts, which involuntarily took the form of prayer, towards home and some far-off friends who were then very dear to me, I tottered down the companion-stairs and made my way towards the cabin. I was stopped by the cries of the Captain's little boy, while his mother severely punished him for some trifling offence.

“Good God!” exclaimed I, “how can you think of flogging poor little George at such a time as this?”

“Don't attempt to interfere,” said this stern-hearted, strong-minded, and morally-moulded mother. “I could not appear before my Maker with the sin on my conscience of not chastising an undutiful child.”

I turned aside, and saw the young Ensign wrapped up in his berth with all the blankets and coverlet rolled high about his shoulders, and he in the act of tying a pillow on his head with a black silk handkerchief.

“What *are* you doing, B——?” murmured I.

“Preparing for when we strike against the rocks,” replied he with a doleful look.

“And you, R——?” I inquired, of as brave a young fellow on shore as ever wore a sword or pulled a trigger, but who was entirely unmanned by this fearful buffeting of the billows, against which his natural courage could avail nothing, and for the wearing agitation of which his not very well stored mind had no remedy. A few days before he had made a solemn vow never to swear an oath again if his life was spared and that he could but once more touch the land. *Now* he was lying on his back in his berth, a Prayer-book in both hands, loudly muttering some devotional passage, while his soldier-servant, on his knees by the bedside, held a candle, with a sleepy and yet an astonished air, at this unique act of religious observance on his master’s part.

Arrested for a moment by the strangely inappropriate words of the prayer so piously intoned, I looked at the book which my bewildered friend had unconsciously opened at random, and saw to my amazement that he was actually occupied with the service for “THE CHURCHING OF WOMEN”!

An involuntary smile at this incongruous dis-

play is the last of my own individual recollections of that eventful night, for I immediately sank down on the drenched coverings of my bed. I know not if I actually fainted, but I most assuredly slept, and soundly too—for when my eyes next opened a broad glare of sunshine, the first I had seen for many days, was streaming full into my face from the raised hatchway above me.

My first sensation—I feel it this moment as clearly though not so vividly as then—was that my spirit had escaped from its mortal coil and that I was in heaven. I sprang on my feet—recovered my scattered senses—looked round, and saw that my companions slept in their several berths. I briskly stepped up the stairs and stood on the sunlit deck. The whole scene was like magic. The wind was totally lulled. The wet sails were clinging motionless to the masts. The landward view was a perfect paradise to my enchanted gaze. There was not a tree or shrub on the heights close to which we were coasting on a swelling flood; but the grass was brilliant, the rocks of varied-coloured grey and brown, the waves and the surf lashing them, with a foam of mingled green and white. Groups of gaily-dressed country-women in blue kirtles and red skirts, and men in brown jackets and trousers, were stepping along the seaside path, casting looks at

our tide-tossed vessel, while the bells of a not distant church spoke a whole history of Christian duty and Sabbath observance. I turned round towards the still heaving sea—it might have been from its boundless extent one of the world's great oceans—there was no sign of a ship nor any object that told of human things, except two dead bodies, soldiers from their scarlet clothing, floating on the swell amidst some broken spars.

All revealed a tale of shipwreck and loss of life. To whom had the catastrophe occurred? Perhaps to some of our own comrades and friends. Yet we were safe—mercifully preserved to the doubtful yet dear chances of worldly life. A blessing to be devoutly grateful for. I was so. It was a moment of real, heartfelt, gushing thanksgiving—and I could not restrain nor did I strive nor wish to stop a copious flood of tears.

That evening I was all safe and sound in Milford Haven, eating a good dinner with ravenous appetite, by a bright fire in the parlour of an inn that seemed to us a palace. Hour by hour officers from some of the missing ships, and from one which had indeed been wrecked off that very coast where we were spared, came joyously in for shelter and comfort like ourselves. What bursts of congratulation shook the very walls as

these warm-hearted fellows grasped the hands of their recovered comrades, and every one told his tale—and almost all together—of the “dangers of the seas!”

But how marvellously, how magically soon the impression of past danger fades from the mind. When the fever is calmed, when the bullet whizzes harmlessly by, when the raging wave sinks quietly into the sand, and the threatened victim of death in many shapes stands again erect and scatheless, how little he thinks of the peril, how ready he is again to run all risks! Ah! if the stamp of sorrow could be as easily effaced from the heart!

I must not enter on a theme tempting but utterly useless. Nor must I trench too deeply on my own space. I have other scenes to sketch. They are dancing confusedly in my brain.

I have reached Harwich harbour, been for a whole winter in Colchester garrison, in the wooden barracks of those days, have made a forced march from east to west, from Essex to Lancashire. I have passed through some wild and active scenes of home service (of which I long afterwards gave a few recollections to print*), gone over two years of shifting quarters in England, and taken my first peep at London. But I am not about to do England for the English. I leave that to

* In ‘*Traits of Travel.*’

more national or more domestic pens. I have returned with my regiment to Ireland, made acquaintance with the North, as I had previously with the South, formed friendships there more intimate and more enduring, that Time could not carry away on his wings nor absence overwhelm in its flood, but which Death, the all-powerful, can alone destroy.

My intention of volunteering into the Line was frustrated by outward events, and the invincible objections of my family arising from them. One of my brothers died in Ireland, another was desperately wounded at the storming of Badajos, and a step-brother was killed at the head of his company in the breach of an Indian fort. The entreaties of my father and near relatives induced me to forego the great object of my wishes, at least for a time, and the disembodiment of the Militia gave me an opportunity of passing over to Scotland, with a friend who had a place in Haddingtonshire, with capital pheasant and partridge preserves, a good stud, and a sporting neighbourhood. Time flew past in busy idleness; an autumn and winter were so many months of pleasure; the Highlands were the scene of a grouse-shooting excursion, a hospitable mansion in Perthshire the head-quarters from which several joyous expeditions radiated, and the exqui-

site takes a fund of attraction, from the popularity of Walter Scott's poetry, but still more so to me from bringing me into close intimacy with one of the most charming families of Edinburgh. Many will remember to a much later period the noble features, fine form, and fascinating manners of Mrs. Fletcher, her four accomplished daughters, and her highly talented sons. Their house in Edinburgh was the centre of everything eminent in literature, science, and art. Jeffrey, Wilson, Thomas Brown, Mrs. Grant of Laggan—but I must not fill my page with merely a record of celebrated names—were among those who formed with many others the circle of a constant intellectual intercourse. How I might have profited by this society—and how little advantage I reaped from it at the time, I am almost ashamed to confess; and I do it only in the hope that some scrap of a moral may be here and there scattered in this book,—but it is too true that I had an actual disrelish for the superior men with whom I was thus thrown in contact. I had a sort of unreasonable repugnance against avowed professional authors. When one was pointed out, or I was introduced to one whose name had figured in a titlepage, or was avowed as writer of some first-rate article in a review, I really seemed to shrink from him, and in my own

mind to strive to undervalue his pursuits, however I might enjoy them. This proceeded from sheer ignorance, and my own consciousness of it. I am sure there was no envy lurking behind, but I believe there was a smothered ambition, and a despairing doubt of ever myself being worthy of such companionship. Diffidence in one's own power takes refuge in a forced depreciation of that of others. I found more pleasure in less distinguished associations, in field sports and town amusements. But still I made some valuable connections with students in the University of about my own age, and my love of literature had insensibly its results. I found myself involuntarily scribbling verses and essays—never to see any light but that of the fire I threw them into. In fact, the best part of my Scotch education was in unlearning what was defective, and preparing the way for what was better: but this at the cost of some serious embarrassments arising from a thoughtless and miscalculating habit of mind, implicit belief in others, and a sanguine reliance on the wheel of Fortune turning always the right way.

Urgent recommendations from my family to become a student in the Temple, and apply myself to the usual preparation for being called to the Bar, led to my going to London with a too

gay and too agreeable party. I thought over the project, and soon relinquished it in despair of my capability of carrying it out. Want of confidence in myself, want of a directing influence to encourage me, want of information as to what is really requisite and what may be dispensed with in professional, political, or other worldly undertakings, threw me back then, as it has often since done, from objects which I now think I might have been equal to. My mind reverted to what was after all I believe its natural vocation—military life; and I resolved on again turning to my former plan of joining the army as a volunteer, but this time without the privilege of obtaining my commission in virtue of the number of men I carried with me.

After running a gay round of life in London for some months, exhausting my means but never my sense of enjoyment—for there was no rock hard enough in which I could not find a gushing spring—I shook hands with some boon companions, put a French vocabulary (and ingeniously useless it was) into my pocket; and in a real rich London fog set off one night by the Dover mail.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CONTINENT.

CALAIS.—VALENCIENNES.—GARRISON LIFE.

WHAT a task it is to recall the minute impressions of any ordinary event of a really long time ago! If it be one in which the heart is concerned it leaves its imprint indelibly, and the mind easily reverts to it—for the electric spark of feeling runs through time as well as space. But subjects of mere observation, producing curiosity or admiration, or even awe, acting on the brain and affecting but the nerves, are with difficulty retraced by memory, after a much shorter period than that which separates my first visit to the Continent from the time that is.

Few men are very profound thinkers for the first quarter of a century of their lives, and in proportion as the temper is ardent and excitable, so is the youth inconsiderate for four or five lustres at least. Nature had given me (whether for woe or weal I cannot yet decide) a sensitive

and sanguine character. I had, like most young Irishmen of that (and I believe every other) day, begun life early, and started almost in boyhood on what the French call *une jeunesse orageuse* ; much enjoyed, much suffered ; and had shade and sunshine distributed pretty equally on my chequered path. I had good health, good spirits, just money enough for my wants, though far too little for my wishes. I had picked up some knowledge of human nature, and paid dearly for it, and I was of an adventurous, I may perhaps say of a romantic, turn, well suited to one who was about to visit strange countries and to enjoy them.

I had learned French imperfectly at school, but had forgotten much of it during years of idleness, in camp and garrison, hunting, shooting, and other not very intellectual pursuits. I had occasionally seen a Frenchman, and had even met Frenchmen in bodies, but my experience of the species or of individuals was next to nothing. In the one case it was chiefly emigrant adventurers that I had from time to time encountered. In the other it was groups of prisoners of war that came under my view, men of coarse habits and fierce tempers, embittered by harsh treatment. None had sufficed to show me the true character of the people. In most instances they only served to strengthen the pre-

judices of early life, those national figments by which the mind of three kingdoms was kept for centuries in ignorance of the truth, regarding a country within five-and-twenty miles of our shores.

I embarked at Dover in a French packet, for my formidable voyage across that for me unexplored sea, on a blustery morning, the sky lowering, the wind blowing strong, and the waves running high over the bar. The passengers were of a motley description, chiefly foreigners, for the English little liked, then even less than they do now, to entrust themselves to the guardianship of French sailors, even for a few hours' passage half of it in their own waters. But on arriving after a rough *traversée* at the wished-for shore, I and my ten or a dozen fellow-travellers had to yield our persons to the tender mercies of the other—must I call them the *gentler* sex? It was low tide and the surf so dangerous that the packet could not enter the harbour, nor could boats run high and dry on the sand. So a large detachment of fine, buxom young fisherwomen, with petticoats not *lower* than their knees, rushed through the spray, and each receiving a cavalier on her shoulders, we were soon borne safely to the strand, amidst shouts of laughter and prodigious enjoyment on the part of our carriers and

the surrounding groups of lookers-on. Any one who sees in those latter days on arriving in Boulogne, perhaps the daughters and grand-daughters of those very women, laden with the heavy trunks and portmanteaus of the passengers from the Custom-house to the hotels, may judge of the ample horse-power of the generation gone by, and wonder that so barbarous a system of transportation for men or baggage could or can be tolerated—much less claimed as a privilege—by land or water.

It is little matter now what were my sensations on touching French ground for the first time. I have somewhere or other sketched some record of them. But they have been well rubbed out of my mind by the oft-repeated trips to and fro between England and all the ports of the French coast of the Channel, and they are gone for ever. And in looking back with any hope of recovering their faint traces my memory seems carried still further away into the vague and fanciful; and I see shadows of a "monk," a "dead ass," or others of Sterne's indelible illustrations; or the bold exaggeration of Hogarth's "Calais Gate," that *chef-d'œuvre* which is to be seen side by side, in Dublin, with another of his masterpieces, "The Last Stake," its rival, but a strong contrast in composition, colour, and sentiment.

My next halting-place was Valenciennes—passing through Dunkerque and Lille and over Mount Cassel, brief memoranda of which remarkable elevation exist in one of the sketches in ‘Traits of Travel.’ And in Valenciennes commenced that wild and imperfect intercourse with French people and French character, which could give none but mistaken notions to me and all those situated as I was.

These were the days of the Army of Occupation. The battle of Waterloo and the Peace of Paris left France prostrate at the feet of coalesced Europe, and the possession of some of her most important fortresses as hostages for future good behaviour. All those frontier *places fortes* were garrisoned by the Allied troops. Cambrai was the head-quarters of the Duke of Wellington, and a large English force occupied Valenciennes. Among other regiments was the 88th, the celebrated “Connaught Rangers,” the most dashing, reckless, and unmanageable of the old “Fighting Brigade,” so famous in the Peninsular war. It had lately returned to Europe after the inglorious campaign under wretched leaders in North America, too late for Waterloo, but waiting with impatient hope for the possible second return of Napoleon, and another miraculous “progress” through France, with a new struggle and new

glory for all—the victors and the vanquished, for all were alike heroic.

But Napoleon, then suffering his desolate doom in St. Helena, never came back again; and the army of occupation was forced to remain inactive, in its unexciting *surveillance* of a great people, writhing under the galling consciousness of defeat and humiliation. Under such circumstances the British soldiers could know really nothing of the French inhabitants. There was contempt on one hand and hatred on the other; but not one feeling to superinduce a benevolent or generous interchange of sentiment between them.

Disappointed in the general hope for a new war, I found my plan for entering as a volunteer into the Connaught Rangers once more frustrated, and I was merely a visitor for some months, an unattached aspirant after more decided military service. I had a brother in the regiment, Lieutenant of Grenadiers, who had carried the colours at Busaco, his first fight, was shot through the body at the storming of Badajos, and, after a miraculous escape and rapid but imperfect cure, wounded again at the battle of Salamanca, in which he bore his part, his left arm supported in a sling, feeble and inflamed from recent exfoliations of the ribs which had been shattered by his former hurt.

There was not a braver soldier or more joyous companion, and few handsomer fellows in the army. He had considerable talent, and had he remained in the service he would have been now high up, and distinguished I am quite sure. But he retired, settled in Ireland, married and died there, and has left a son and two daughters all long since with families of their own—generation succeeding to generation. William Grattan was the author of a most amusing and graphic memoir of his old regiment the Connaught Rangers; and of a more brief but far more important publication, a pamphlet,* which for vigour of style, closeness of reasoning, independence of feeling, and the entire success of its object deserves to live, and does so I well know, in the grateful memory of many a gallant companion in the old Peninsular War. To that pamphlet chiefly, aided by the advocacy of the late Duke of Richmond in the House of Lords, was owing the long-ungraciously withheld decoration of the Peninsular medal, which, however, may be seen to-day hanging on the breasts of noble veterans of all ranks, the remnant of those phalanxes which maintained the pride and power of England in so many a hard-fought field.

* 'The Peninsular Medal and the Duke of Wellington.' London.

Under the auspices of this much-loved brother I was at once received as "One of Ours" by the fine fellows forming the mess of the 88th, and I soon became intimate with many others of the various branches of all arms in the garrison, staff-officers of every grade, and several pleasant English families, attracted by the convivial gaiety of the places held by our forces in the Netherlands.

What joyous days and nights these were! What a succession of dinners, balls, concerts—what coursing-matches, horse-races, foot-races! Nothing very brilliant compared to the sports at home, but unmatched for fun, frolic, and animation in any part of the world except Great Britain and Ireland and their colonies. There was certainly too much drinking in those times, and perhaps a little too much gambling, and rather too much quarrelling. The wine was cheap and plentiful. Champagne corks flew freely after the first spoonful of soup and till long after the dessert was on the table. A somewhat barbarous system I admit; and too often—but not very often—a meeting in the grey of the morning outside the glacis, and the exchange of pistol-shots from unsteady hands (seldom with any serious result) was the winding up of the previous night's carouse.

But take it altogether it was a pleasant, pleasant time—and not time entirely lost I verily believe. True friendships arose out of these revelries; great knowledge of life and character; much information from men of adventurous pursuits and inquiring minds; new tastes, and valuable warnings from some sad examples of talents thrown away and opportunities lost.

I might here insert a long list of many, who gave *éclat* to all our doings from their celebrity and personal qualities—Colville, Keane, Manly Power, and others. But those distinguished officers are almost all swept away, the survivors at the present day of the then numerous body being at that period in their youthful prime, having seen service, being fit for anything, but with their career of very active duty cut short by the much deplored and most unpopular peace. Several of those contemporaries of mine have gained high rank by seniority, others have long since quitted the service or retired on half-pay, too many of them are dead and gone, and how many, alas, utterly forgotten!

Some spirited volumes have preserved for the chance readers of after-times slight records of the persons and the pleasures I allude to. ‘The Reminiscences of an Aide-de-camp,’ by Lord William Lennox, gave a sketch of a few years’

service on the Staff of the Great Duke, with kindly recollections of his own companions. And the 'Adventures of an Artillery Officer,' by Benson Hill, contained I think a more detailed account of individuals so well known to them both. The mention of those two contributors to the light literature of the days gone by, forcibly brings back to my mind one leading feature of our garrison enjoyments, which deserves another touch of the pen, to keep alive what no pencil has illustrated.

So I, too, must pay my passing tribute to the buried fame of the Valenciennes private theatricals—that is to say to the performance of the garrison amateurs in the public theatre for purposes of charity, assisted by several professional actresses specially engaged in England for our "company." And boldly do I say here, having alas! but few survivors to confirm the verdict now, that I doubt if out of London there has ever been a regular *troupe* containing more admirable specimens of dramatic talent. I will record some of the names as they occur to my memory.

Captain Prescott of the Artillery, known afterwards on the London stage as Mr. Ward.

Lieutenant-Colonel M'Gregor of the 88th.

Mr. Fonblanque of the 31st, the learned Commissioner of Bankrupts.

Major Marley of the 4th Foot.

Lieutenant (now Major-General) Meade of the 88th.

Lieutenant Grattan of the same.

Lieutenant Benson Hill of the Artillery, who was for many subsequent years an actor in London.

Lieutenant West of the Engineers.

Lieutenant (afterwards Sir Henry) Meredith of the Artillery.

The well known, I fear I might use a less flattering epithet, Simon Fairfield, one of the Connaught Rangers, hard to be kept in bounds.

Joe Kelly, the celebrated Major Kelly of Waterloo reputation, the brother of Michael Kelly the composer, in early life an actor of English opera, with a tenor voice of a tone and quality only inferior to that of poor Sim Fairfield's, which was supremely exquisite.

Lieutenant Furlong of the 23rd Fencibles, afterwards Captain of the 4th Dragoon Guards, happily still alive and flourishing with the brevet rank of Major, with a few others of my list, to indorse this little (play)bill of mine if they ever see it.

Mr. Curtis of the Commissariat.

Frederick Yates of the same corps, the long established manager and popular actor of the Adelphi Theatre.

Lieutenant Cole of the 23rd, who also made the stage his profession, and as actor and manager (under another name), and as author (in his own) has gained reputation and independence.

Mr. — of the 81st;—will any one be able to fill up the blank?—the very best Yorkshireman I ever saw on the stage, after the celebrated London actors Edwin and Knight.

There were several others whose names I now forget, like the last alluded to (was it Farmer?), and I may be allowed to close the list with that of the author of these recollections. And I am sure that out of the whole a dozen might have been selected, who would have done credit to any company, in genteel or sentimental comedy, broad farce, or operatic performance. Tragedy we did not attempt. Mediocrity in that line is odious to both men and (newspaper) columns, and to gods no doubt. Gallantry will not allow of my omitting the names of the ladies above referred to, and to whose assistance we were so much indebted. They were Mrs. Dawson and her daughter, Miss Penley, Miss Rosina Penley, and Miss Jonas; all actresses of full average merit, and moreover every one extremely good-looking, more than one of great personal attractions. What or where are they now? Mr. Penley, brother of the (then) young ladies, an ac-

customed stage manager to his father's Windsor company, performed those functions for us with great satisfaction.

For several months we gave a performance once a fortnight. And I may say (without the aid of large capitals or notes of admiration) "to crowded houses with great applause and roars of laughter"—the legitimate formula. All the neighbouring garrisons and cantonments sent large contingents to swell the audiences, and frequently the Duke and his Staff came over expressly from Cambrai, as is recorded in Lord William Lennox's pleasant volumes.

And now a long farewell to those gay scenes, the gallant men who created and enjoyed them with me, the lovely and accomplished women before and behind the curtain who gave them their chief charm! Were we all happy in those exciting days? In so many elements of pleasure were there no drawbacks of discontent, no previous causes of unspoken sorrow, no heavy contributions paid to the imperfection of our common nature? Of course there were, as there always are and must ever be in the chequered occupations of life, in young or old, rich or poor, in the gay and sanguine, as in the constitutionally desponding and sad. But still there is always a preponderance of joy over sorrow, for those who possess the in-

estimable blessing of good health and who are young in spirit, in hope, and in courage. These are the true and ever-springing sources of happiness, gushing out joyously through all impediments of fate or fortune—not restricted, thank heaven! to the mere circumstances of time, to the calculation of years, to elasticity of limb or lightness of form. If the heart beat freely and the conscience be clear, if we can look back without remorse and forward without gloom, there is still as of yore enjoyment in the present, abundant in quality even though modified in degree. Blessed is he who can understand and feel the truth. As for the envious, selfish, and sordid who deny it, I can only pity them, and thank God I was cast in a different mould. And therefore I can turn round and gaze through the long vista of time and see the brilliant drop-scene at the far-off end, and people the proscenium and wings with buoyant figures and beaming looks, and pronounce such a verdict of enjoyment on the Valenciennes Company of 1816 as is revelled in by the Aldershatt amateurs of 1861.

These garrison gaieties were however of a restricted and narrow nature. They were thoroughly national, English in everything. They had their uses as I before observed, and no one more than myself was disposed to make the most

of them. But I was impatiently longing to know something of France and of the French. As I grew familiar with the language, I seemed to yearn for acquaintanceship with the people. A few visits to neighbouring garrison towns, occasional peeps into sequestered villages and farm-houses, gave but glimpses into the ways of the inhabitants ; and from reasons before stated there was none of the ease and *abandon* of manner displayed to us which private travellers might have found on all hands. I saw plenty of English and Germans, and some scattered Russian detachments, from the padded Guards to the rough-clad Cossacks. All these seemed very much at home. The natives only were not so ; and it was those I wished to observe and study. I was also impatient to see Paris, the great object of my curiosity. So I soon formed a party with three or four agreeable and good-natured companions, and I bid adieu to old Valenciennes, its ramparts and fossés and huge iron-bound gates—and in due time we reached the capital and were installed in one of the best hotels on the Boulevards.

CHAPTER VIII.

PARIS FORTY YEARS AGO.

THE Paris of forty years ago, though in certain respects very different and in some of its internal features far inferior, was in its outlines and general aspect identical with the Paris of to-day. The rambling faubourgs, huge triumphal arches called *portes* (being open they cannot be called *gates*), the great public buildings, palaces and monuments—the rough *pavé*, dirty streets, and blouse-clad people are quite the same, only in another generation. Physiognomy, manners, language, and general costume are unaltered. The monarchy of that time has been succeeded by a republic, that again by an empire—but these are but names, in which there is really nothing to affect the genius of the inhabitants. There has been no permanent formation. All is floating and uncertain. No institutions have as yet taken root ; and until they do, half a century more or less has but small influence on national character.

Though architectural constructions have been much improved in the most showy and most frequented quarters, still the outer crust, the frame of the prodigious picture is just what it has been for ages ; and I have no doubt the sensations of the stranger who, for the first time, enters this great mart of civilization in this current year 1861, are precisely similar to those which individuals of my own standing were moved by, in the earlier half of the present century, and those of our fathers before us.

It is only by comparison with what we have previously known that any novel object affects us. And as London or Paris a hundred or two hundred years ago was in the same degree as unlike the itself of its actual existence, our respected ancestors were probably struck as we ourselves have been, with the contrasts for praise or blame in the two cities. Many of the changes in each have been mutual and of unquestionable value—gas-lights, macadamized streets, enlarged shop-windows, deeper and wider drainage ; and in the establishment of *trottoirs* or side-walks, Paris has made a notable stride towards London comfort.

But I nevertheless miss much that was very attractive in the aspect of the place at the period of the Restoration and long after. And here arises

something like a question in my mind, between utilitarianism on the one hand and picturesqueness on the other. It is a question, perhaps worth examining, whether the positive, matter-of-fact character of the alterations of late years, so strongly exemplifying the business-like leaning of the times, is after all a decided proof of national improvement. Every people has its instinctive tastes and tendencies ; love for the arts, for literature, and science, or for agriculture, commerce, industrial works, or warlike pursuits. The refinements and elegancies of social life may be inherent in one nation, and substantial advantages the *summum bonum* of another. Each left to its natural bias may become a model in its way, and in approaching its distinctive perfection may partially adopt, without seeking to emulate, the special characteristics of its neighbour.

It is perhaps desirable that these idiosyncrasies should be preserved in nations as in individuals. Otherwise successive failures might follow on an attempted uniformity, and those struggles against nature lead to jealousies and hatreds without end. While the contrasts between peoples are abounding sources of reciprocal enjoyment ; and the self-love of all mankind is sure, in comparing what is seen remarkable abroad with what was left at home, to strike the balance in its own

favour. For these reasons I doubt if the former loose irregularity of Paris was not more characteristic than its present formal magnificence. Without wishing to strain a point for the sake of a paradox, I cannot help looking back on the heart of the city as it was, with affectionate regret—the noble trees lining the Boulevards, the terraces with hanging gardens and rich foliage, those fanciful *bains chinois*, those villas buried in shrubs and flowers, more like country than town, those unasphalted sideways, soft (and albeit muddy at times) as rural lanes; the crumbling crazy-looking buildings, in cramped *culs-de-sac* or *carrefours*, at once grotesque and picturesque. Then the romantic insecurity of a night walk, the murky *réverbères* swinging on ropes, at long intervals, across the roads and streets, blowing to and fro with glimmering mystery, in fog and wind and rain. Imagination had then something to work on. Superstition had not to fly to the burying-ground for aliment. Poetry was free of the city, and had no need of country excursions.

Then by night and by day there was the gurgle of the *ruisseau* of the *rue du Bac* (Madame de Staël's delight) and all the other *ruisseaux* in all the other *rues*, dancing gaily down the middle, and throwing up lively splashes on the laughing passers-by, to whom the mishaps of their fellow-

piétons were so amusing. And when a sudden thunder-storm or heavy shower flooded those unruly streams, and planks on running wheels were thrown across by the vagrant *pontonniérs*, and tripped over so lightly by the *soubrettes*, how we paused to admire the peculiar grace with which the latter raised the petticoat (unconstrained by crinoline monstrosity) just high enough to show the ankle, and something more of the neat and *bien-chaussé* limb.

Besides, to say nothing of the rickety old fiacres, there were the high-swung, lazy-looking, but most comfortable cabriolets, on leathern springs that never creaked or broke under the weight of oneself and the driver who sat cheek-by-jowl beside one, often an *ancien militaire* with his ribbon at his button-hole, always a chattering amusing cicerone, full of local anecdote—though possibly now and then somewhat of an extortioner.

And were there not giants in those days?—not mere monsters of six feet, six inches high—we have them now occasionally in every country. But practitioners of huge fun, and wonderfully overgrown talent for buffoonery and impudence. Who can forget the celebrated *faux marquis*?—not the youthful *protégé* of Marie Antoinette who went by that *sobriquet* at Versailles just at the

outbreak of the Revolution, but a fellow of infinite jest and most grotesque gestures in the days of the Restoration, dressed in burlesque court costume, carrying a fiddle which he never could play—perhaps because he never tried—but which was an excuse for his amazing fluency of appeal to passers-by, discoursing of all possible subjects and getting his fee for nothing and giving his advice *gratis*. He was but one of a legion of illustrious charlatans, the best imitator of whom is the great Mangin of to-day, whose plumed helm is the only thing that nods during the utterance of his admirable rhodomontade.

The dress of the men in those far-back times was a source of never-failing wonderment to unaccustomed English eyes, while on the other hand *les Anglaises pour rire* furnished abundance of fun to the Parisians. The *ancien régime* was personified by tottering old Legitimists, in brown silk roquelaures, cocked hats and little muffs,—the surviving Republicans with long coats *à la queue de morue*, wide-brimmed and sugarloaf-crowned hats with broad brass buckles in the bands,—and the dandies of that epoch fancifully attired in long, swallow-tailed, short-bodied coats, tight pantaloons, and Hessian boots. The women wore plenty of flounces but no hoops, short waists, close-fitting sleeves, and wonderfully big bonnets,

but behind which they could not if they would, and would not if they could, conceal their sparkling eyes and smiling lips. The coquetry of those huge coal-scuttle head-dresses was a trade in itself, and it half-redeemed their ugliness. As many movements were required to let a woman see and be seen from under such a masked battery, as a Spanish donna finds necessary when explaining herself through the agency of her fan. Now what has the wearer of the present cockleshell cap (it is degradation to the bonnet or *chapeau* to give it their name) to do? Nothing, but to walk in the crowded streets or promenades straightforward, barefaced, and nearly bareheaded, up to or past no matter how many staring men, without the chance of a little modest finesse, to half conceal half betray the charms which are now as public as

“The liberal winds, those chartered libertines.”

Let me look back and dazzle my imagination with the brilliant windows of the Palais Royal of those departed days, not the little shops with their gas-lighted glitter of real or mock jewelry—I never cared much for them. But the whole length of the wax-illuminated range above, all gleaming with the light from hundreds of tapers from the many gambling-houses, those shining temples of Fortune, alluring, seductive,

ruinous to some, no doubt, but still marvellously interesting and not quite uninteresting, presenting such wonderful scenes of life as no stage-play could rival—comedy, farce, deep tragedy, in all their most fantastic varieties.

They are all swept away. The dice and the cards are condemned, the tables confiscated, the little ivory rakes for scraping up the money, the lean-fingered, lynx-eyed croupiers who gathered it in, the motley crowd of adventurers, machinery, and men alike, are all dispersed. But where are they gone to? Has a stern morality reclaimed them, has fraud retired from public life, and swindling taken the veil? Is the Temple cleared, is the Bourse shut up? Are railway shares and bonds under ban? Can no one plunder the unwary by false pretences and with legal forms? Really the crusade against games of chance is but labour lost, while speculation has its license unrecalled, and the funds are open—not for investment alone, but for *betting*, lay to it what flattering unction you may.

In those terribly immoral times, gambling was done boldly, in the open eye of day or night, by sunshine or lamplight, as the case might be. In these chastened ones, its votaries are driven to holes and corners, to counting-houses, board-rooms, and offices—no one knows where. If

novices were cheated then, they appealed to a wide circle of their brother-adventurers whose interest it was to see fair play. Whether there was or was not honour among the thieves, there was at any rate sympathy among their victims. They stood by each other, and often beat the bank *en détail* when they failed to break it *en gros*.

But now roguery has become a solitary vice. It has no witnesses but the deceiver and his dupe—the plausible seller, the ignorant buyer. *Roulette* or *rouge et noir* gave many more chances for winning and something like a guarantee. But the jobber, if he chooses it, has you wholly at his mercy, and if he be a rascal your doom is sealed. You have not a loop-hole of escape. Law refuses all relief. Equity requires proof, and you have none but your word, which against his is only truth against falsehood, without a feather's weight in its favour. You seek personal redress perhaps. He swears the peace against you. You flog him, and he claps you into jail. No, no! If a gentleman *must* follow his wicked bent and gamble, the old, open, “bold-faced villainy” of the Palais Royal, Frascati, or the Kursaal is by far the best—or let us, for the sake of morality, call it the least bad.

Self-murder is not a pleasant recreation for

either actors or spectators, but somehow they used to make it more poetical in the year 1820, or thereabouts. There was a flavour of the ancient monarchy, its good breeding, its gracefulness, its romance, even in suicide. Nowadays a poor needlewoman driven to despair by want, or two unfortunate girls crossed in love, or a *soubrette* and her good-for-nothing *bon ami*, having little money, less energy, and no sense of right, get tired of work, of love itself, shut themselves up in a dingy garret with a pan of charcoal, and suffocate themselves singly or in couples, in their everyday clothes, without a notion of the beautiful or a bit of the sublime. But at, and some years after, the Restoration, you could scarcely walk on the quays or by the riverside without day by day seeing, or hearing of, a body fished up, or two bodies tied to each other, all streaming with water and rose-coloured ribbons, in some fancy dress, the mourning or the bridal, with a scrap of writing pinned to them, and, when not washed out, telling some little tale of homely sentiment, which might have been vulgar had it not been true.

Duelling (shall I say Alas !) is almost an exploded custom, even in France. The whistling sound of the pistol-bullet or the clash of sword-blades rarely awaken the echoes of the Bois de

Boulogne. Its sudden extinction as an admitted institution, at home in our own happy islands, is assuredly one of the moral miracles of the age, a fortuitous dispensation utterly unaccountable. If its disappearance in Ireland had, like that of the noxious reptiles driven out by St. Patrick, any association of sancity about it, it might command more reverence than it has done. Or if in England it left society imbued with cordial good feeling, and freed from envy, arrogance, or meanness, why one might take off one's hat, bow low, and bid it God speed ! But as it is as sure to come back one day to the Emerald Isle as whiskey-drinking did after its total abolition by Father Mathew ; and some other day to Great Britain, like hob-nobbing, snuff-taking, or any other custom for awhile in abeyance, we may just wait the revival, without glorifying ourselves too loudly on the extinction of even one fashionable vice.

But it is regarding France that I was about to remark, that the affairs of honour, so common during my early acquaintance with that country, had sometimes an air of medieval brusqueness, not to say fierceness, about them, startling and worthy of a niche in some romance of the feudal times. But in spite of that there was a dash of chivalry in these abrupt *rencontres*—I am not

praising them, mind—that tingled through one's heated fancy, like a breeze on the brow of a nervous patient. It was bracing and vivifying. It made the step more elastic.. It threw the head higher. The chest expanded. You breathed quick but freely, though your lips were compressed. Whatever your age you felt younger. You must have been dull indeed not to brighten up. And it was a very hard heart that did not beat tenderly towards one of the combatants at least—for you involuntarily took a side, even though you had never seen them before.

One evening just after dusk, “moth-time,” as Keats so graphically calls it, barely dark, before nature actually put on its night mantle, the atmosphere thick and not a breath of air, I strolled out alone after dinner into the Champs Élysées, being of a truant disposition just then, and not having anything particular to do. Within a few paces of the road, where a single fiacre was standing without any driver visible, I distinguished a group of six men moving in a very confined space ; and the gleam from a lamp suspended in the trees above them fell upon a couple of sword-blades—*fleurets*, ordinary foils with the buttons removed from their sharpened points. I stepped briskly forward, for I at once divined what was going on.

In almost a moment two of the men had thrown off their coats and grasped their weapons. One of them quickly rolled or tucked up the shirt-sleeve of his sword-arm. There was a whole volume of character displayed in the movement of that muscular limb, in the firm, fixed attitude, the imperious toss of the head, and the stamp which seemed to tell the ground he was master of what he stood on. The other man was calmer in air, steady, but without gesticulation or bravado. He was at once my favourite. I strove to distinguish his face. I felt as if I ought to know him. But the shadow of the *casquettes* worn by both prevented my seeing a feature of either.

“Commencez!” said a voice from among the group of four *témoins*—seconds we call them, rather ungrammatically when there are two at a side, as is always the case on the Continent. I had placed myself close without any notice being taken.

At the word the two principals were on guard. There was no ceremony—no salute—they were there for business, and to it they set. The *fleurets* crossed and clashed, with that whisking, subtle sound, so weird, almost unearthly, yet so exciting! At the very first pass my favourite’s point went deep into his adversary’s arm. Blood trickled from it, but he took no note and made

no pause, nor did the *témoins* interfere to stop the combat, as is usual after the first blood drawn in ordinary quarrels. I saw that it was to be *à l'outrance*, for life and death. The next lunge was from the wounded man. He flung himself forward to his full stride and with all his force. His blade passed up to the hilt, in and through the body of his foe, who fell heavily forward upon him. He disengaged himself, stepped back, drew out the blade, and while the *témoins* caught the *dead* man as he fell, for he seemed dead before he touched the ground, his slayer coolly wiped the blood from his weapon;—and often since then have I started at the well-known engraving in all the print-shops, showing the identical attitude and action, indelibly impressed on my mind. But the scene was not sketched on that occasion. There was no artist there. I was the sole, accidental witness, except the *cocher* who came from behind a tree when the affair was over, to assist in carrying the body to his fiacre. The wounded man carelessly bound a handkerchief round his bleeding arm, and with little assistance put on his long great coat, buttoned it up close and walked away with his friends. The fiacre went slowly off at the same time. And there I stood alone, bewildered and stupefied, for I know not how long. The

whole matter had not taken altogether more than three or four minutes. At least so it appeared to me. I had heard not one word but the fatal signal "Commencez" in its hoarse and muttered utterance. Whether the intense excitement and the immediate reaction blunted or partially paralyzed my senses I cannot say. But the whole thing seemed like an ugly dream. I strove in vain for some time to rouse myself and shake it off, in the noise and bustle of the open-air amusements in the direction of the Place Louis XV. then so called, since then *Place de la Révolution*, and other titles in accordance with the passing feelings of succeeding epochs.

Of the event itself I heard no more. I mentioned it to my gay associates. They were sorry they missed seeing it. I looked in the papers for some days. They had no cognizance of it. Perhaps the Police were *seized of it*, as the phrase goes. Perhaps not. It was of no consequence. It was only *un Français de moins*. There were plenty to spare.

I have thus passingly, in a few hurried pages, touched on some of the peculiar features of the Parisian portrait of forty years ago and somewhat later. There has been duelling, suicide, gambling in the foreground. *Ruiseaux, réverbères, charlatans, mud, darkness, and some other*

accessories in the back and at the wings. A good deal of this scenery has been shifted ; and a picture is now substituted of more private self-murder, less evident single combats when there are any at all, suppressed gaming-tables, decorous roguery, colossal buildings, well-lighted streets, smooth carriage-ways, covered gutters and raised side-walks. These are on the whole advantageous changes for the wealthier classes, and indirectly to the poorer ones, by driving them from the close, unhealthy city to the pure suburban air. Prospectively considered, they may lessen the chances of *émeutes*, by giving wider space and straighter lines, for the evolutions of troops and the range of artillery. But the best of them are only material improvements. I see no decided triumph for morality in the majority of them ; and if I were disposed to strike a debtor and creditor account, I am not sure which way the balance would lie. But I would not depreciate what is good because it may be somewhat adulterated. I only pay a tribute to what was imperfect because those superficial characteristics harmonized with the national complexion. France is still the same in the deeper traits of her nature, in spite of the heavy pall thrown over her political form, at once concealing and cramping its proportions.

Whenever I come to France now I seem to come on a voyage of discovery after France itself, and at first I am unable to find it. It is something else that meets my view. A gorgeous pageant, a pretentious masquerade, where every one wears a dull domino, but without life, elasticity, or versatile display. Gigantic masses of building, at exorbitant cost and in ponderous monotony. Vast commercial enterprises, without industrial spirit. Heavy financial schemes, without adventurous buoyancy. The gloomy mystery of loans instead of the brilliant delusions of the lottery.

But after a little while I feel satisfied that under all this disguise the real thing is there, only hidden and denaturalized; that the dead weight of despotism will be in good time cast off with all its congenial pomp; and the country that I loved so well and lived in so long, be again very like what it was of old—and not so very long ago. I hope to see the revival of constitutional forms; a free press, a free parliament, literature unshackled, speech unmuzzled, and buoyant energy pervading the whole social system. But without at present “diving into profundities,” as Burton had it, and as my title-page repeats; and confining myself to the less serious subjects touched on just now, I shall only hope that France may re-

sume her own distinctive pursuits, that bull-fights may be left to Spain, boxing-matches to England, bowie-knives to America, rapiers to the cheek-slashing students of Heidelberg and Bonn ; but that the neat, small-sword practice may still flourish in France, if the martial spirit is to be kept up at all. I like to fall back on the illusions of a refined even though a degenerate chivalry, rather than the stolid *renaissance* of heavy hunting-parties, and *curées aux flambeaux*, in cocked hats, court dress, and with *couteaux de chasse*. I would let my imagination revert to the brilliant exploits of Lodi, Marengo, and Austerlitz, rather than the solemn slaughters of Solferino and Magenta. There was plenty of talent, bravery, and triumph on these last-named bloody fields—but somehow the combination does not strike me as quite French, not the French at any rate that I learned in my early experience. And I sometimes rather wildly wish that I had power to do and undo many things, that probably after all I wouldn't meddle with even if I could. For reflection might whisper that things are better as they are—that they may be safely left to take their course—and that it is wiser to go with the tide and turn when it turns, than exhaust one's strength by swimming against it.

These are some of the revived impressions that

flit across my mind. Many others press after them. But the dread of unconscious plagiarisms and platitudes exercises a salutary influence over my pen. I no longer throw the reins on its neck, but hold it tight in hand, like a too impetuous steed. I must restrain it from going over, not merely at a jog-trot, but even at a canter or gallop, the opera, the theatres, public shows, picture-galleries, *cafés*, *restaurants*—all the well-known attractions of Paris as it was, and is, and will be for ages to come.

Historical recollections always lay strewn around. Not a square or street, not a turn that did not bring you on them in swarms. Not a building that was not haunted with them. Every secluded nook was a nest of tradition; and they were as various as plentiful. In fact, for a rapid visit and to a hurried observer, they were too numerous, and not sufficiently concentrated to make a powerful and fixed impression. The thoughts ran back for centuries, into feudal times and dark ages, and bounded again along the open ways of glory and grandeur. The storehouses of art were open to memory. Science, poetry, eloquence, military conquest, Revolutionary horrors, all danced in commingling forms before the mind—but all was so scattered, restless, and disjointed, that they were like scenes in some monster phan-

tasmagoria. It was as though a thousand years of theatrical wonders were acting in your brain. Nothing had the stamp of real life. One felt a natural instinct of doubt, and was ready for any change. Paris was a place to admire but not to venerate, to wonder at but not bow down to. No site of great natural beauty ravished your gaze. No specific recollection fixed your homage. You were as though bounding on the billows of an agitated sea; wave, sky, storm, calm, sunshine, all combining in quick confusion, and nothing solid on which to rest or build. To know Paris as it ought to be known, to feel and understand it as it deserves, a residence is required, time sufficient to sooth the feverish heat of first impressions, to classify one's thoughts, to sift the many springing subjects of inquiry, to mix with celebrities, form intimacies, create friendships, and have something to love.

Subsequent opportunities were afforded to me for all this. Whether I was wise or worthy enough to profit by it is another question. At the time I now treat of I had only to skim the surface of things; to run a race of irregular enjoyment with my young companions, to see all that our fancy longed for and our means could command; and then to break away in different directions, with sundry objects to attempt if we

could not quite attain them. My way led to the South; and I was soon on the road alone, to pay a promised visit to an intimate and accomplished friend in Bordeaux.

CHAPTER IX.

THE SOUTH.—BORDEAUX.

WHAT a delicious thing it was in those far-back days to travel alone ! Alone, in a strange country, among a new people, with youth, health, a buoyant spirit, no incumbrance—not even an object—no control—not even a wife—no duties, except at the Custom-house—no rights, but those of man—nothing, in short, to perform as a task, dispute about as a claim, or be cheated of as an expectation.

I was enough of a soldier to know the comfort of having but little baggage, of never separating myself from it, and keeping it as light as possible. My purse not very full, my letter of credit very limited, and my personal habits not expensive, I ran no risk of being fleeced by picture or horse dealers or practitioners in *vertu*, of losing my health by high living, or my money by high play. I had no strong fancy for sight-seeing *as such*, that is to say because other people saw sights and to have to boast of having seen them. I

liked to look at curious things for their sake, and at beautiful things for my own. I was susceptible of vivid and lasting impressions. I was constantly receiving them and constant in retaining them. Above all things I loved to remark character and its contrasts, and I believe I studied them from very early life without knowing that I was a student. This study of Human Nature grew with my growth, and it has ever been to me the most interesting, though I doubt if it was the most profitable, of all pursuits. Science has its charms for those who value material fact more than speculative fancies. To discover a given truth, according to the stern and unerring principles of mathematics, is no doubt a grand result. But to seek for a doubtful solution through the mazes of intellectual discrepancies, delights me even more. The study of man is a game of chance and skill combined; baffling, puzzling, and uncertain; always exciting, often useless; but when successful, of abounding pleasure.

The amazing varieties of character defy calculation. The ever-shifting scenery of the mind presents myriads of different shapes and changing aspects. The brain has its dissolving views, unlimited, and subject to no laws of art. We follow them like shadows, and the less tangible they are the more hot is our pursuit. Such is man's na-

ture, longing for self-knowledge with Solon's *to kalon* in our mind, and for ever running a round of hopeless efforts to attain it.

We habitually hear that man is the creature of circumstances, and that if he be placed in any new position, you may judge of what he will become from your acquaintanceship with his antecedents. That may be in some measure true as regards a particular individual; but it is no test at all for the rest of the species. For any, ay, every one, of them in the selfsame circumstances, would be likely to feel, think, and act in a totally different manner from each other. So that to *know* mankind one should be able to perform the impossibility of setting every trait of the countless mass in the same place and under the same influences, so as to learn accurately what each one in his turn would think and feel and do.

Let us therefore be satisfied with the study, but abandon all hope of the knowledge, of mankind. As religion cannot force men to believe what they cannot comprehend, so Philosophy ought to teach men not to seek for what they cannot attain. The true wisdom is to labour for what is possible. True genius is the faculty of discovering the means of reaching it. To attempt the description of the present vicious system of

society, without having a practicable plan of improvement, is doing worse than nothing, for even a faulty system is better than anarchy; and you cannot create a better system than the old one, with the same materials of which it was formed.

Imperfection is not only the nature, but the destiny of man. A mixture of virtue and vice is the basis of his constitution. To modify the latter and keep the former from running to excess is the true philosophy. To turn them to account should be our aim; and not to attempt too much or expect unattainable things, the basis of all our inquiries.

How I look back on my various journeys in diligences, *malles-poste*, *pataches*, *char-à-bancs* and other Continental vehicles, to say nothing of the sundry means of home conveyance, long before steam came into fashion to annihilate time, space, and the chances of adventure! Who could get up anything of an association (I choose the word advisedly) worth having, in the hot haste of locomotive acquaintanceship, in compartments generally crowded, and sure to contain, even when only half-full, too many dull and disagreeable people? Before you can exchange a few sentences, bring out a thought, or attempt a conversation, the station is reached, the journey over, and you are thrown back on that worst of all

possible company, yourself. Yes, the days for travelling alone are past and gone, unless you seek some still unviolated tract of country where science and speculation have not penetrated, and where you may be content to mix familiarly with "Carinthian boors" or some such semi-civilized specimens of our species.

However, I can look back with the pleasure of knowing that I really have had my day, like other lucky dogs ; and my Diligence memories, on the very occasion I began this chapter to talk about, are to this moment full of enjoyment. It was the first time I had truly been thrown into companionship with any portion of the French people. I began to feel myself really in the country ; and I entered with wonderful zest into all the little chances of five days and nights of travelling, for working my way as deep as I could, into the rather rough stratum of national character presented by my half-dozen or more fellow-travellers. As this is neither a sentimental journey, nor a volume of confessions, nor an "autobiography," I suppress details which might not appear to others as interesting as I thought them ; and I will not trouble my readers with descriptions of town or country, lest they might fancy my flowers to be weeds, and find my novelties very ancient.

I passed through Orléans, where the statue

of Jean d'Arc—through Tours, whose beautiful bridge—through Angoulême, whose charming public walk were the objects that most struck me; besides Amboise, Blois, and Poitiers; and reached Bordeaux, rather tired, but very sorry my journey was ended, and quite ready to have gone it all over again, only backwards, had circumstances suited—which they did not.

At Bordeaux I enjoyed the great advantage of possessing a friend, and a visit to him was, as I said before, the chief reason of my making it my first halting or breathing place, on the undefined and desultory ramble for which I had started from Paris, something in the style of Prince Pucklar Muskau's, *jünger*, wandering. My friend was the only son and partner of one of the great wine-merchants, of Irish birth, whose names have given such celebrity to the trade and to the fine town which is its head-quarters. David the son of Walter was a Gascon born, of a French mother, a capital mixture of Irish and French character, manly, brave, and intellectual. He had travelled much in Europe and America, had great taste in the arts, was most hospitable and generous, Lieutenant-Colonel in the National Guard, and a warm partisan of the Bourbons.

For a couple of months the houses in town and country of those kind friends formed my

home. They introduced me to several families of their fellow "merchant princes," initiated me into all the palatable arcana of the best cellars, enlightend me on the nice shades in the different growths of the Médoc district ; with such practical specimens, from their own most *recherché* stock as almost turned me from an amateur into a *gourmet*. I became very learned in claret. The society I mixed with consisted of well informed, highly educated and accomplished people, able to take a part in all subjects of interest in politics, literature, and arts, far superior to the people of other commercial towns which I might mention but won't. But the one dominant and almost absorbing topic of conversation was wine, wine, wine. They did not drink it to excess, very far from that. But they tasted, and winked at, and smelt it, citicized, praised, and boasted of it, with a gusto that was amusing at first, and at length downrightly contagious. One cannot be day after day and week after week in the very centre of the subject on which every tongue is eloquent—the bull's eye, as may be said, of the target that every rifle is aimed at—without becoming infected with the general taste, and longing yourself to hit the mark ; and particularly in a case which was on every discussion exemplified by such exquisite illustrations as the one in question.

The good-living of Bordeaux is proverbial, and my experience then and afterwards, when it became my residence, enables me to vouch for the merit of its markets in all the varieties of supply. The private entertainments were on a grand and liberal scale. Good-living was refined by good breeding and enhanced by good fellowship. The Bordeaux of those days—I hope it is the same at present—was a glorious place for a young man to learn French in, though the accent was not quite so pure as at Amboise or Blois.

I made a most agreeable excursion to Paulihac at the mouth of the Garonne, and to all the celebrated vineyards in the neighbourhood, tasting the choicest specimens of the proprietors of Château Margaux, Lafitte, and others of the most renowned qualities of *vin rouge*; and at Bordeaux there was every opportunity for indulging in Sauterne, Barsac, and the finest growths of the white wines of *Grave*. I could certainly make a chapter in honour of all these delicious beverages did I not know that there are volumes already published on the subject, and I therefore leave it in other and better hands, satisfied with my practical experience of its attractions.


On the occasion just mentioned the party I went with was composed of my friend and chaperon, before alluded to, Colonel Palmer, then

member for Bath, the recent purchaser of a vine property in the neighbourhood of Bordeaux, the product of which was well known to the London clubs ; and three American gentlemen, admirable fellows in their different ways and styles. Three days passed rapidly and pleasantly. The days are long gone by and every one of the party with them, save and except myself. Morton, a Bordeaux merchant, the most jovial, jocular, and fluent of story-tellers ; Captain Ramage, a capital specimen of Irish Americanism, a gallant naval officer who had served as flag-lieutenant to the famous Commodore Rogers ; and Major Mercer, who was aide-de-camp to General Scott in his Canadian campaign, and whom I met after a quarter of a century later at Washington in his rank of General, but fearfully altered from the good-looking young fellow, my companion in the vineyards of Médoc. I like to pay this passing tribute to those my first three American acquaintances, of sufficient intimacy to excite my great desire to visit that transatlantic country, which it was long afterwards my lot to know so much of ; but I must not dwell on slight personal recollections of all the estimable and agreeable companions with whom I came into contact, or I should leave but little room for more conspicuous persons.

The theatre of Bordeaux has been always fa-

mous as the best school of dancing in France. The greatest artists male and female have always "hailed," as the Yankees say, from that celebrated stage, even if they were not actually "raised" there. The very *coryphées* were first-rate performers; and the ballet was really something to remember through life.

At a period so close to the overthrow of Napoleon and the restoration of the Bourbons, politics were of paramount importance in such a leading place as Bordeaux, and they rivalled in the general conversations of society, dancing, commerce, and even wine. People in that part of France had worked themselves up to a state of outrageous partisanship for the returned royal family, and their emigrant followers then at the head of affairs everywhere. There did not seem to me to be any opposition party in existence. I saw nothing of either Bonapartists or Republicans at that time. I thought little about them, and therefore did not seek the scattered remains which were nevertheless in existence, chiefly in the country towns and villages and among the small proprietary of rural estates. I associated with one set alone, and had no opportunity, even if I had possessed the taste at that period, to enter with unbiassed opinions into subjects of public interest. In fact I was a mere bird of



passage, taking such a view of things as a bird's eye might take, and with no motive or passions of a political kind to ruffle the plumage of the wings I flew on.

I remember seeing (as I strolled through Bordeaux one day) written on a wall in chalk,

“LOUIS UNE FOIS MORT CHARLES
X PARAITRA” (*disparaîtra*).

I thought it a good *jeu de mots*, without then paying much attention to the prophecy it announced, and repeated it to some of my Bourbonite friends. They were scandalized and furious, made a great hubbub, consulted the police, and were committing I don't know what ridiculous and extravagant demonstrations on the subject, which were really the first cause of my turning my thoughts into the consideration of French politics. And I cannot say to what extent my views might have been affected or my mind engaged in the pursuit of what subsequently occupied it so much, had not sudden and most unlooked-for intelligence of a family nature imperatively called for my presence in Ireland.

My preparations were soon made, my leave-taking of my French and American and other friends quickly over, and my place secured in a small schooner of a hundred and twenty tons

bound for Dublin, with a cargo of wines and brandies, and sufficiently narrow space for six passengers, five others besides me, all Irishmen, who stowed themselves into their narrow berths and made the best of the confined accommodations (so to call them)—and we dropped down the Garonne with the tide, passed Pauilhac and the lighthouse at the mouth of the river, and got out to sea with a fair wind.

I carried with me from France on this first occasion none but agreeable recollections, with the wish they gave birth to of being able some day to return and resume the thread of an intercourse which this sudden breaking off had snapped asunder. My curiosity was awakened. I felt as though I had read a few chapters in a new book, and I longed to get deeper into it. What I had seen of the French people I liked, and one naturally expects first impressions when they are favourable to improve with experience. Many a sad disappointment follows this expectation both as to individuals and nations. But even now, after many a hard lesson, I encourage the feeling still. It is my nature, as a celebrated living Author is fond of saying of himself in public, touching matters which it requires a keen knowledge of oneself to be able to verify, and which conscience may force one to renounce—in private.

For the first five days and nights we cut steadily through the water. We met no check above or below it ; no adverse winds, no sunken rocks. The Bay of Biscay was most amiable, the breeze fresh and favourable. All the sails of our little craft were spread out to catch its loudest breath or its faintest whisper. We were anxious to get on faster in proportion with every increase of speed. No success seemed enough for us. We wanted to beat old Time, whose pinions were flapping above, behind, around us ; like a lucky gambler who presses on, doubles his stake again and again, resolves to break the bank—and is at last taken aback and loses all that he had won. So it was with us. The sudden springing up of a fierce gale, after we had scudded through the chops of the Channel, swept past Scilly, fairly entered the Irish Sea, and foolishly thought ourselves at home, stopped us short, forced us to tack, and tack, and tack, once or twice in great danger of being swamped altogether, from the schooner refusing to obey the helm, and at last we were obliged to turn stern to windward and drive back with the hurricane, some two hundred miles on ~~the~~ the very course we had so flourishingly accomplished. All the work was to do over again. And with the annoyance of the loss of time, the discomfort of bad living, and a

wet ship, came the unpleasant conviction that we were under the care of a "captain," so dubbed by courtesy, who knew nothing whatever of navigation and who was by trade a butcher, and by ill fortune a bankrupt, and merely placed in the nominal command of this frail vessel, to get him out of the way of his creditors in Yarmouth. This poor man, Geldert by name, though nominally in command of the schooner was really under the guidance and control, as far as its management was concerned, of his mate, a rough and ignorant fellow, and he in his turn had often to consult and submit to the conflicting opinions of the six or seven seamen composing the crew, not one of the whole party ever having before been in the Irish Channel, and all incapable of taking an observation or consulting a chart. This state of things might find something approaching an analogy in boards and courts on shore, and it may serve as a warning to unthinking travellers to inquire as to the nautical qualities of "captains" as well as ships, before they entrust their lives and portmanteaus on board the miserable little vessels employed in what is called the coasting trade. Four of my fellow-passengers, including a Colonel in the Spanish service returning on leave of absence to see his friends in Ireland, swore, "but rather late," like the crow

in the fable, that they would not be again taken in by the devices of consignees, brokers, or shipping agents. But fortunately for myself and the others of us there was one sneering, cynical, tippling, and constantly half-screwed old fellow who made up our half-dozen, who was a skipper of forty years' experience in that very sea where we were now blown about *au gré du vent*, and who at length was induced, when we broke out into actual mutiny against captain and mate, to take the command of the vessel, and to steer us safely and anchor us in the familiar old Bay of Dublin, after perils and escapes which I will spare my readers the account of. The fate of the poor captain and his "chief officer" is however worth recording. On a voyage back from England to France some short time after, they had a desperate quarrel. The captain by a most unfortunate stretch of authority, assisted by the sailors, put the mate in irons, tied his arms firmly with a cord, and took upon himself the task of steering the poor schooner, which he did most effectually during a stiff gale into a reef of rocks near Ushant on the French coast, where she soon went to pieces, and every one on board (with the exception of one sailor who escaped to tell the story) perished ; including the wife and daughter of the ill-fated captain, the latter of whom he was

taking to France to give her the benefit of a foreign education. Several salutary morals might be found in this sad little episode ; but I will spare my readers, and leave the *pointing* of them to themselves.

I wish to consider the following nine or ten months of my life as a blank. I cannot tear the leaves out of memory's volume, but I have long striven to efface the contents. With what success or what failure is now of small importance even to myself—of no consequence whatever to any other. Almost every ill that mind or body is heir to was crowded into that brief but heavy portion of time. Disappointment of every kind—loss in various shapes, of hopes, health, and happiness, and (what I never cared much for in proportion to them) of money and money's worth. That short visit to Ireland taught me some bitter lessons—but I doubt if I profited much by them. They were given in a language foreign to my own character and very hard to learn. But they produced one good effect. They convinced me that self-reliance is the only true, unfailing fund, on which he who has to make his way through life ought to draw. That dependence on others is the very worst wall to place one's back against. It is sure some time or other to crumble to pieces

—and the sooner the better, before he who leans on it loses the faculty of his own proper power, and grows slothful and servile in his reliance on anything else. Many a young man since that dark period in my particular annals has no doubt gone through the same kind of trials, and found himself sentenced to the same fate. If the eye of such a one should by chance rest on this page, I hope it may prove a stimulus to his energy and possibly a solace for his wrongs. *En avant! Courage!* my young friend, whoever you are. The world is wide and full of goodness, truth, and honour: not to overflowing, or there would be no room for the evil passions under which we have suffered. Do not from past deceptions imagine that all is deceit. Go on manfully, taking chance for what is to come. Give your confidence still to your fellow-beings. Trust, even at the risk of repeated mistakes. Be deluded, cheated, imposed on again and again, rather than creep on in doubt and fear and trembling. Life is worth nothing on such terms. Let faith, hope, and charity be your guiding principles—but above all have faith, for that includes both the others.

I took my departure from Ireland—for a long, long absence—leaving behind me at least one object to love, some that I ought to hate, but I only strove to forget them; a disputed legacy,

and a chancery suit that lasted five-and-thirty years from beginning to end.

Bear up against it as we may, with all the help of reason, resignation, resentment, pride, it is a hard and a cruel necessity, to leave, it may be for ever, the country of your birth, the scene of your early attachments, your dearest hopes, and to be thrown on the wide world companionless and forlorn.

CHAPTER X.

BORDEAUX REVISITED.—A SETTLEMENT.—LITERARY ATTEMPTS.—THE FRENCH REGICIDES.

A FEW weeks passed in London and the neighbourhood, to give me time to recover from the effects of a dangerous fever, one of those bodily ills alluded to in the last chapter, were required also for preparations for my next intended move on life's journey. Despairing of every chance at home, renouncing all hope of what could have made home a certainty, disgusted and almost desperate, I had resolved on going to South America, to join one of the expeditions which had some time previously left Ireland, under the command of adventurous speculators unfitted for such heroic enterprises, which with their imperfect guidance met nothing but disaster and defeat.

A short correspondence with one of the agents concerned decided me to repair to Bordeaux, there to embark in a ship bound to Venezuela, and I was glad that I thus had an opportunity of

again seeing my kind and hospitable friend, and there taking my final adieu of Europe.

I embarked at Gravesend on board another vessel of smaller size and light burthen, better commanded and equipped than the unlucky one I had escaped from the year before ; and I left the Thames little hoping and little caring ever to sail into it again. When we put out to sea, as I stood forward close to the bowsprit and looking down upon the waves through which we were cutting our way, I verily believe that had any one pushed me overboard I should not have once struck out to save myself from sinking. Never in all the various exigencies of a chequered career have I felt such utter hopelessness as then. I thought I had nothing to live for. All seemed lost. I was to myself like nothing, and valueless for the whole world. But from that desolate state of mind I was soon aroused by a new excitement. Ten days of boisterous and critical weather, across the Bay of Biscay and into the Garonne, brought me again to well-remembered scenes—and to myself. Within three months of that time I was settled down, a married man, within about ten leagues of Bordeaux, in a beautiful country, far from any English settlers or visitors, and deeply engaged in my first literary undertaking. South American independence

and its gallant upholders faded gradually from my mind, which turned with ardour into its fresh pursuit. I occasionally sailed or rowed down the river, to visit my Bordeaux friends, to gather books of reference for my intended new work, and on my return home, to deliver myself up really and in earnest for the first time, to the inexpressible delight of industrious study, with an object in view. All my previous desultory reading, all the little scraps of prose and verse thrown off on frivolous occasions, were but preparations for what I was now bent on accomplishing, and which I laboured at without cessation, for it was truly a labour of love, with a consciousness of energy that redeemed in my own mind the manifold imperfections of my performance. Very great was the pleasure of this new epoch in an existence which had heretofore been but a waste of time, but which now held out a promise of something, but *what* I dared not trust myself to hope.

I believe all first efforts in authorship take the form of verse. Such was my case at any rate. And very much charmed I was when, my eldest-born bantling made its appearance in the shape of an octavo volume, printed in rather mean-looking type but on good paper, at one of the chief presses of Bordeaux. I had taken up my

quarters there to see the sheets through the press, having had no previous experience in the art of correcting it, and more unfortunately still no critical friend at hand, at all capable of revising the manuscript and making the six-cantoed romance less unworthy than it was. I took with me to London a ready-printed supply of my volume in "sheets," and I found most efficient publishers in the house of Longman and Co. Then leaving the book to its fate, which was not brilliant, I returned to my home near Bordeaux to fall to work on a tragedy, and lay the foundation of some efforts in prose, which in the end were more to the purpose and more profitable.

It was during the time of these early literary occupations that a chance meeting with a then obscure individual, but one of a notorious class, furnished materials for some personal sketches that I will introduce here, although all of them except the first were the fruits of long subsequent observation.

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE FRENCH REGICIDES.

Among the manifold crimes standing out like landmarks on the flood of history, there is one case of legislative murder branded by universal reprobation.

Other iniquities of the kind have had their

apologists. Opinions have varied ; and reasons, good or bad, have been assigned in excuse or justification. Private vengeance, religious bigotry, or patriot fury have dealt deadly blows against the pretenders to divine right ; and palliating sympathizers have lauded each separate sacrifice. But the act now in question is alone undefended, a monument of wanton and gratuitous cruelty.

King-killing is not in itself perhaps more heinous than ordinary manslaughter. Kings are after all but men, amenable to punishment like other offenders ; and if they really merit death by violent means, so should they die.

But their case is at all times exceptional. Wrong-doing is in them most frequently a necessity of their position, which is at best a perilous if not a false one. Enormous allowance should be made for them. Great toleration for their errors. Intense compassion for their failures. They should be judged leniently, and when punished at all it is perhaps well that they should suffer only the *minimum* amount awarded to their offences.

There are always extenuating circumstances in the misdoings of tyrants. They are encouraged and urged on by the vile creatures who, stigmatized as mere instruments, are too often the real

criminals ; at any rate accessories before and after and *during* the fact ; screened by their comparatively menial rank from the greater odium that falls on the crowned culprit whom they instigate, while seeming only to obey him.

There are no minor punishments for monarchs, because they cannot commit small crimes. They are never petty-larceny rogues. If they rob at all it is by wholesale, and when they take to killing they kill outright. Therefore the penalties applied to them are heavy and extreme. Death and deposition are the only two recognized by the political code, and, all things considered, perhaps the first should be abolished and the latter alone retained. For it is far better that a dozen culpable sovereigns should escape than that one should undergo the ordinary infliction of the block or the guillotine. If not actually hedged in by "a divinity," they are at least fenced round with reverence that should be almost as inviolate. The kingly office is one held on sufferance. A factitious institution, whose very existence hangs on a slight thread of veneration, which it is well to leave uncut. Reduce it to the ordinary level of vulgar realities and it becomes a mockery—deprive Majesty of its externals, and it is indeed but a jest, according to the witty and wise conundrum. And to make it such—to strip it of

all dignity, to vilify, degrade, and drag it in the dirt, were the objects of the men of whom I am now about to treat. It was the kingly office, rather than the hapless person who filled it at the time of the great French Revolution, that was the mark of hatred to those who hoped to guide and manage that huge monster which so soon crushed its creators.

Taken separately, one by one, there was not probably a single individual among the French regicides, who personally hated the man, while they all abhorred the monarch. They required a tangible type, on which to wreak their vengeance against the principle it personified. Were the throne itself a living thing, the being who filled it would have escaped unscathed. Had the ruin of an abstraction been a palpable and visible fact, the human sacrifice would have been spared.

Yet the members of the National Convention who voted the death of Louis XVI. and sent him to the scaffold must nevertheless figure, to the end of time, among the great criminals of the world. Many shades were blended in the dark colour of their aggregate character.

Political zealots, frantic patriots, the calculating, the enthusiastic, the brave, the base, the timid were all to be found in that associate band. A

terrible monument of the weakness as well as the wickedness of human nature, they combined the qualities which excite at once disgust and commiseration. For men so lost as some of them were to the finer feelings of humanity we can have no pity. As they were merciless towards their victim, so is posterity towards them. But for the wretched beings who, with hearts naturally good and views originally honest, were hurried into the vortex, and in losing all self-control were in a measure absolved from entire responsibility, some faint exculpation may be pleaded.

There is a wonderful fascination in the annals of THE TERROR, as the hideous epoch which these men illustrated is graphically named. The actors move about in evidence ; and we gaze at while we loathe them, as we do at the mysteries of a chamber of horrors—like birds attracted by the inevitable reptile that watches for and absorbs them.

The number who voted for the death of the king was three hundred and thirty-six. Two hundred and eighty-three had previously voted for an appeal to the people. But on the question of a respite, after the sentence, three hundred and eighty was the majority, against three hundred and ten, of the regicides *purs et simples*.

Of these three hundred and eighty cruel judges many were soon consigned to the scaffold where they had so recently sent their royal victim, by the bloodthirsty rivals who shared their crime. The chief actors in the Reign of Terror, who seized on the government, controlled the Convention, and ruled the country, have left names of undying infamy. As a class they deserve a wholesale execration. Individually they meet with a graduated abhorrence. It is hard to say who were the worst. But even if we can measure the degrees of guilt, we must consider the circumstances under which each culprit was placed, and the dispositions so exposed to the controlling force of example, the ignoble effect of fear, or the other occult influences which act on the passions of men.

In no recorded instance has the necessity of the prayer "not to be led into temptation" been ever more fearfully exemplified, than in that of the miserable sinners now to be dealt with. Many of them were no doubt intrinsically vile, of tendencies so depraved as only to want opportunities for action; others so bold as well as bad as to make the opportunities for themselves; and some so naturally well-disposed as to have remained, perhaps, to the end of their lives as virtuous as they were in the beginning, had not those fatal opportunities opened out, to develope

their weakness and extinguish their worth, while, among the numerous recorded instances of such discrepancies, it must be remembered that even Tiberius, the master-tyrant of all history, was, according to Tacitus, amiable in private life.

There is still another aspect in which these men must be considered—as those who pass through the paroxysms of a fever, whose reason is for awhile obscured, whose nervous force is over-excited, whose imagination is inflamed, whose passions are maddened, and whose very being loses for a time its identity. But who, when the crisis is passed, return under new circumstances and a totally changed position, to so much of their original nature, that they act, speak, and feel like those who recovering from a terrible malady forget their temporary wanderings, and resume their former character in all its integral reality.

The task of classifying those political specimens must be left to those who find their conduct of such absorbing interest as to justify the study. That wide differences of degree existed among the body of the regicides, whatever their party designations may have been—Girondins, Brissotins, Montagnards, or Jacobins—is unquestionable. And it is by no means sure that those who took the lead among them, who from the force of temperament and circumstances were

pre-eminent, were by any means the worst. The examination of each separate character, in comparison with its fellows, opens out a wide field for research. The vehement diatribes of contemporary authors cannot do justice to a subject requiring profound investigation. Filled with rage and disgust at atrocities committed as it were before their eyes, and within their reach, sweeping denunciations came naturally from the outraged observers. The accusation, the sentence, and the execution, were simultaneous in this process of literary Lynch law. And it is right that it should be so. Such offences against all that is sacred in nature should be subjected to that retribution. The punishment and the example ought to be alike, immediate and terrible. When judicial calmness comes in after times to consider the question, it may discover too much violence in the earliest utterance of horror, and even in the echoing sounds of the quick-succeeding age that follows the epoch, and the facts that make it infamous. Posterity may sift and balance evidence; history pronounce its sentence with dignified composure. But it is impossible for us, writers of the present time, some of us but one generation, others only two, removed from the shock of the great French Revolution, whose vibrations are still thrilling

through us, to be fully fitted for the duty of this grand inquest.

It is therefore that I do not attempt an elaborate discussion of the act of modern regicide, nor an anatomical scrutiny into the character of the actors. I am rather warned than seduced by the example of eminent authors who have already handled the subject; and I confine myself in these pages to slight sketches of the few Conventionalists whom the chances of foreign travel threw upon my path.

The first of these was

THOMAS.

I met him at a dinner-party in Bordeaux, about the year 1825. He was of ordinary and not prepossessing appearance, unattractive manners, and, as far as one short meeting could enable me to judge, of no particular intellectual mark. I sat near him, and heard him mix in the general conversation at table, not knowing even his name. It was only after dinner, while the company were moving about in the drawing-room, taking coffee and liqueurs, that my host (an American, married to a French lady of fortune, and domiciled in France) casually mentioned to me that the stout, short, easy-mannered gentleman beside me was "Thomas the Regicide."

I confess that I felt a shock of what may be called moral electricity shoot through me. It was assuredly a new sensation. I yielded to its influence, and without saying a word, immediately left the party and quitted the house. One of my strongest personal prejudices, good or bad, was wounded to the quick. I had always held in aversion the men of blood—the three hundred and eighty—of whom Monsieur Thomas was one.

I don't think I had ever at that time read a list of their names. I certainly did not remember twenty out of the whole; and I had no recollection whatever of the paltry cipher who formed the first visible specimen to my eyes of that gross sum of iniquity.

He has doubtless long passed from the earth. He was then apparently between fifty and sixty years of age. His head nearly bald, his scattered grey hair, and the sinister expression of his one eye—though I forget whether it was in more than one sense the *left* one—long made their unpleasing impression on my memory. Of his personal and private character I was entirely ignorant. His social relations and position were equally unknown to me. Where he lived, or how, I had no inclination to inquire. My only wish respecting him was to see or hear no more

of him, nor did I from that day; taking it as a matter of course that he was one of the surviving Conventionalists found in their native country by the Empire, left there by the Restoration, and living in their obscurity, unobstructed by Louis XVIII., whose relations with many of them, as Count de Provence, justified his toleration of them as King of France.

On the day of my meeting with Monsieur Thomas I was five-and-thirty years nearer the period of his recorded crime than I am now; and neither time, nor reflection, nor custom—the strongest of all influences—had then blunted the poignancy of my repugnance, or enabled me to simulate an indifference which even to this day I do not feel. A cooler head or a more apathetic temperament would possibly have made light of the *rencontre* I have described.

There are many persons so constituted as to walk over reptiles by dozens, without the nervous thrill that others feel at the bare sight of one. So would abundant worthy individuals have associated freely from the first with those deep-stained offenders from whom others, more sensitive but not more pure, instinctively shrink. Most men, it is supposed, have their favourite sin, many their one particular aversion. My *bête noire* on settling in France was truly and

unaffectedly a French regicide. I was brought up from my earliest years in strong repugnance to the horrors of the French Revolution, the Reign of Terror, and the murderers of Louis XVI. I had never fully or calmly considered the details of the frightful picture. The composition, colouring, and grouping formed one revolting whole, worthy the pencil of Breughel de l'Enfer, and I never shifted the distance or managed the light through which I viewed it.

Hence my intuitive loathing for Monsieur Thomas, and my punctilious avoidance for many years subsequent to my meeting with him, of all contact with any of his sanguinary colleagues.

But no one is free from the changes of feeling which grow up imperceptibly in the mind, on questions of politics and morals. Who that looks back on his early sympathies and antipathies is not astonished at his altered sentiments, so hard to be accounted for, yet so positive and decided?

Without entering too far into the inquiry, unimportant in itself, I can fairly trace my own modified notions on this particular subject to my having come into close acquaintanceship with the family of GARRAU, another of the Convention-
alists, on occasion of my occupying a furnished house belonging to them, in the Department of the Gironde, for which he had been a deputy, though

never belonging to the celebrated party of the Girondists. Garrau was an out-and-out Jacobin. He voted the death of the king without appeal to the people and without respite of the sentence; and I believe he was a consistent patriot—in his own acceptation of the term—to the last.

He was absent in Germany when I became the tenant of his handsome and accomplished wife, and I never saw any direct evidence of him except in his portrait which decorated her *boudoir*—a fine manly face, and three-quarters length of body, in the uniform of Commissioner to the Armies of Italy and of the Pyrénées, a post which he had filled together with Cavaignac, the father of the eminent General, who rose so high and fell so rapidly in 1848, under the overpowering destiny of Louis Napoleon.

The society in Madame Garrau's charming country seat, very near the house I occupied with my family, was naturally composed of persons of her and her husband's political opinions. These were of the most advanced order of the liberalism of France in those days. Bonapartists and Republicans of all shades seemed joined in a party of general opposition to Bourbonism in every shape, and of course to the then existing government of Louis XVIII.

The circle in which we mixed contained se-

veral ladies and gentlemen of cultivated taste and agreeable manners. They were accomplished and hospitable, none of them rich, but all in easy circumstances, chiefly small proprietors inhabiting *campagnes* in a lovely country, or living in the small town close by. Rural *fêtes*, shooting parties, dinners, musical and dancing *soirées*, sociability in all its pleasant forms, were constantly in active succession, and nothing could be more seductive and soothing than the system of our entertainers and visitors. Their various characters blended insensibly, like chemical affinities formed of heterogeneous particles, by a common attraction. I could long dwell on the memory of those days, and the ever-varying, yet on the whole monotonous amusements in which we indulged. They moved, like the fairies, in an unbroken ring, to the same measure and possibly the same music—but of the latter there are I believe no specimens set down in score.

Our neighbours were all cheerful and always well-bred. They had their faults no doubt, but they did not *afficher* them. In the lively little scandal there was plenty of piquancy, but no bitterness. In short I saw French character there in its best point of view, as distinguished from the dazzling extravagance of Paris, and the corruption that festers beneath its brilliant surface.

All this took me by surprise ; for in Bordeaux, where I had recently resided, there was in the expensive entertainments, grand balls, and fine concerts, a certain tone of pretension usual in mercantile communities, while the *société noble* in commercial towns seems always struggling to keep up its claim to exclusiveness and superiority. We had, previously to our move, heard nothing particular about the people we were likely to mix with in our country retreat. There were no English within twenty miles of us ; and, unaccustomed to French provincial intercourse, I did not know how much it was then influenced by political opinions ; so I dropped down among my new associates unconscious of their all being of the same *coterie*, and all at absolute domestic war with the Royalists, who I soon discovered formed the wealthiest and most distinguished portion of the surrounding population.

From it we were entirely apart. Without letters of introduction, depending on the persons we did know for any extension of our acquaintanceship, our circle was of course circumscribed, and though quite satisfied with its many attractions, I was soon sorry to find that I lost much in knowing none of those beyond its pale. This was in itself however unimportant but for a circumstance so annoying, entirely arising from my ex-

clusive connection with the opposite *clique*, that I think it well to record it here, as germane to the matter of this chapter, and perhaps a useful warning to present or future British residents in France.

We gave a large party to the families who had shown us so much attention—music, dancing, and a supper—our previous sociable meetings having been small family dinners interchanged between us and them. The evening fixed on was the 21st of January. The party came off. We had no apologies. Nothing could have been more gay or enjoyable. There was some beauty and a great deal of gracefulness among the women. The men were hilarious and happy. Everything wore the air of a social triumph. And when all was over, the guests departed, the lights extinguished, and the dawn replacing their expiring gleams, we, the hosts, congratulated ourselves on the mid-winter's night entertainment, and agreed that it was altogether *un grand succès*.

Has any one of my readers started in dismay at any passage in the preceding paragraph? Have any of them remarked the date of our joyous doings? Does everybody—very many do—recollect, at least on being reminded of it, that the 21st of January was the anniversary of the execution of Louis XVI.?

When the next morning brought me my ministerial local newspaper at my late breakfast, in its border of deep mourning, imagine, sympathetic reader, the astonishment and remorse with which I read the account of the religious ceremonies of the day before, the *messe expiatoire*, the long leading article appropriate to the solemn feelings of all the just-thinking world!

What an outrage I had committed against social decency! I really covered my face for shame, and was for a long time unable to make up my mind to mention the subject to the other unintentional offender, my partner in the inadvertent *contretemps*—to use a trivial word as applied to the fearful mistake we had made.

How could I have been so stupid as to have chosen that fatal day—as not to have once thought of its real character, during the week between sending out the invitations and the evening when I received my guests with such inappropriate gaiety? The fact was that in those times I thought very little about politics, and scarcely talked of them at all. There was little doing in the world around me beyond social organization and the progress of material interests. The angry passions had subsided. Things were settling down into constitutional forms. In the remote districts there was no agitation. The dominant

party was so sure of its supremacy, and the Opposition seemed then so completely subdued, that all seemed to have made a tacit compromise, satisfied to merge in a representative government the acerbity of former feelings, when either faction might in an open struggle gain the upper hand.

Then, the people I was so intimate with at the time had no inducement to revert in general conversation to topics of republican excess. They were glad enough to sink all reference to their fathers' misdeeds. And the greatest offence of all—the murders of the Royal Family—was the very last to be mentioned by them.

Again, by way of explanation of my own extraordinary oversight, I may mention that I was at that very time employed in the concoction of my first literary attempt. So absorbed by the excitement, so occupied in the researches of history for the illustration of romance, that my mind was really centuries back in its associations, and the recent transactions of political France were completely overlaid by the traditions of *La Gaule Poétique*.*

If I can thus account for my own want of reflection, I cannot by any means excuse my

* The title of Marchangy's charming work, which, though containing several affectations and some exaggerations, was to me in those days a delightful study, and the basis of the "attempt" above referred to.

republican and Bonapartist friends for their want of due consideration. They knew well the day we were *celebrating* together in a way so unbecoming to say the least. They should not have allowed unthinking foreigners to be so committed, whatever they themselves might think or do on such an occasion. I have made them many a mental reproach, though I never conveyed any to them by speech or writing. It was no use. I had disgraced myself in the eyes of the whole Royalist and Bourbon *clique*. The mischief was done. Quarrelling with the other set would not have repaired it. So, the only reparation I had to make to the justly offended people who did not know me, was to withdraw myself from the society of those who did, by leaving the neighbourhood altogether. This I did as soon as I could make it convenient. I quitted the banks of the Dordogne, between which the stream, formed of ever-renewed waters, is still flowing in unchanged appearance. The claret country and its fruitful vineyards were abandoned, perhaps for ever. I shifted the scene of my wanderings to Paris, where I was soon engulfed in more stimulating relations than those I had for many months so quietly enjoyed.

Barring the one regret on my conscience herein confessed and repented of, I had much to be

satisfied with, in being so closely within the influence, if not exactly in connection with one of the French regicides. I became, from the mere force of habit, more tolerant of opinions, and more imbued with largeness of view. I lost nothing of my abhorrence for the abstract principle of guilt, but I instinctively made more allowance for the errors and weakness of my fellow-creatures. And that is one of the unspeakable advantages which the vicissitudes of travel confer on the minds of some travellers.

As a resident of Paris I soon made the acquaintance of many individuals deeply implicated in the events of the Revolution, and I met, without any actual revulsion of feeling, numbers who sympathized with, if they did not actually share in, the great crime I have been so vehemently and so long denouncing. The *salons* of the capital brought one into strange companionships. In the great crowd of the world I rubbed against many a notorious celebrity, from Talleyrand the recreant Bishop of Autun, to Jullien de Paris, the private friend of Robespierre and the commissary of the *Comité du Salut Public* for the bloody mission to Bordeaux in 1794. I wore out insensibly by this continual contact much over-sensitiveness, modified various crude notions, and expanded to the amenities and charities of our nature.

"I would rather shake a prejudice than raise a pyramid," is a phrase I like to quote, and willingly identify with myself. I learned to appreciate the sentiment it conveys, from the inevitable experience of foreign travel; and I was by degrees so animated with its influence, that I think I was altogether a more enlightened man when a new movement took me across the frontier line, and saw me established among a motley throng of British residents in Brussels, at the close of the year 1827.

I shall in other portions of the work of which this chapter is an episode have a good deal to say about that city, of the country which it adorns, and of the stirring events of whose Revolution in 1830 I was a close observer. At present I have only to allude to it as the refuge of several of the French regicides, banished from the land of their birth by the Act of "Amnesty" of January 12, 1816, of which their cases formed the chief exception. And it may be well to point out here that these men were not banished from France as regicides, but as rebels. It was not that they voted for the death of Louis XVI. in 1793, but because they took service under Napoleon I. in 1815. These men, all the remnant in fact of the guilty three hundred and eighty, had lived in France unobstructedly during the Republic, the

Empire, and the Restoration. It was only on the second return of Louis XVIII. after Waterloo and the Hundred Days, that the *ordonnance* of January 1816 doomed to exile for life any of the regicides who had during that period filled any public functions under Bonaparte. So that the very men who skulked in the Netherlands under ban, and were objects of pious horror to many when I met them, might have appeared there a year before, as many of them did in society in Paris and elsewhere, without exciting much remark or any particular repugnance.

Some of these notorious persons were soon pointed out to me on the promenades of the park or on the boulevards. But it was from my intimacy with General William Pepe, whom I had known several years before in London, that I fell into acquaintanceship with some of the most conspicuous among them.

SIXÈRES I never spoke to, nor MERLIN de Douai. The former lived retired and obscure. Declining to make any new acquaintanceship in his eightieth year, he tottered along at times in the sunny avenues, his diminutive frame and keen small features giving an impression of feeble health and acute intellect, as he leaned on the arm of a friend, whom I afterwards knew slightly, his nephew, a colonel in the French service. I

never passed Siéyès without remembering his terrible sentence on the trial of Louis XVI., "*La mort sans phrase*," the curt brutality of which has survived his dozens of elaborate constitutions, and the score of other works, great and small, which he published, before, during, and after the Revolution. Every one knows that Siéyès was originally a priest, and that his old *sobriquet* of Abbé was never replaced in public custom by his subsequent title of Count. The others of his fellow-exiles in Belgium, with the exception of David, had all been lawyers before they became members of the Convention and were afterwards made peers by Napoleon.

DAVID, a really great painter, the reviver of the French Historical School, was one of the most fierce adherents of Robespierre and his fellow-tyrants. His occupation as an artist and his deficiency in oratorical talent allowed him no opportunities of distinguishing himself in the terrible tumults of the Convention. His solitary vote for the death of the King, without respite and without appeal, is all the record I have discovered of his public life. He had lived for some time in Brussels after his exile, but he had left it for some other retreat about the time I arrived there. I missed him and was sorry for it, for I should have been glad to see so eminent an artist

and whatever works he might have had in his *atelier*.

A friend of mine who knew David, said to him in a jocular way on the return of Louis XVIII. to France, "You ought to take the King's portrait." "*Je veux bien*"—was the characteristic regicidal reply—" *apportez-moi sa tête.*"

MERLIN de Douai was about seventy years of age when I first saw him in Brussels. He was robust and healthy-looking, walked firmly, held himself well up, and showed an independent, it might perhaps be called a harsh, bearing. It was not one that would tempt a stranger to take any steps towards a *rapprochement*; and as I never met him but in the streets I consequently knew nothing more of him. He was a man of considerable ability, and made himself remarkable in his various positions during a long public life. Connected with the Duke of Orleans (*Egalité*) and in some measure suspected of a leaning towards the King, it is conjectured that fear of being himself compromised was the main cause of his violent and obstinate persecution of the doomed monarch in his bitter days of trial.

MERLIN was one of those unfortunate beings who have not nerve enough to meet and conquer the terrible temptations of their career; and who in the hour of danger sacrifice for the sake of

personal safety all that is just and merciful. He goes down to posterity in the biographies as a man of talent without consistency, and energy without courage. Were it possible to have known the secrets of his heart, we might pronounce more decidedly, and perhaps more favourably, on his character.

BERLIER, like Siéyès and Merlin, a Count of the Empire, was a quiet, well-bred, and unassuming gentleman. Like the others, far advanced in life, no one could imagine from his placid air and pleasing manners that he had lived in the Reign of Terror and outlived it—acted in it, trafficked in agony, and been morally bathed in blood. It moves at once our pity and our anger—we are humiliated and infuriate—to admit that such inferior creatures as some of those men really were when closely seen, could have been the movers of the great events that upturned for half a century the whole order of political and social existence, and inflicted such calamities on the world. While I conversed with such poor specimens, how have I lamented that I was not born in time to know Mirabeau, Danton, St. Just, those gigantic beings whose mighty words or deeds made Europe thrill with admiration or with horror! How unlucky—or how lucky—was Mirabeau to have been cut off before

what ought to have been his time! How he would have buffeted the billows whose flood-gates he let loose! How breasted the waves, as he thundered forth his denunciations and rode above the storm! Or sinking beneath its force, have given dignity to the scaffold on which his lion head would have rolled!

It would be insulting to the memory of this great orator and statesman to couple his name with any of his monster-contemporaries were they but types of mere brute force, like the vast majority. But Danton had fine passions, and St. Just prodigious talent and a mind of granite power. The rogues and ruffians they were leagued with have died and left but names. But they, with their hateful associate Robespierre, have left memories behind them. Danton and St. Just are the boldest and "the best of cut-throats;" while Mirabeau, who never murdered either friend or enemy, is a monument, grander—because we feel that he might have been more terrible—than any.

I am coming rapidly down to a wretched contrast with the demigods of guilt. But before reaching it, I must notice, as I pass, two others of far minor note, THIBAudeau and CHAZAL. It is like leaving a picture by Michael Angelo for a platitude by West, or turning from a sym-

phony of Beethoven or one of Handel's choruses, to the piping of Gretry or Adam.

But I must give a few parting words to poor Count BERLIER, from whom I derived some small information which I failed to profit by. He made no impression on me. He was but a learned mediocrity at best. Like the others, he occupied himself with literature, and he made me a present of a copy of his 'History of Ancient Gaul,' which I never found time to read. I never touched on the theme of the great iniquity in my meetings with him. I felt always reluctant to couple him in my actual knowledge with the Revolutionary horrors; and when I at times gazed on him while he talked of the passing matters of the day, I have mentally exclaimed—as I pictured him in fancy on the benches of the Convention, voting for the King's death in the least merciful form, *sans appel et sans sursis*—" *Que diable allait-il faire dans cette galère?*" How far better had it been for him had he slipped through life as he began it, a *médiocre avocat* at Dijon, than to have added another useless name to the scroll of infamy!

THIBAUDEAU was a man of far more note, as you at once perceived when you first came face to face with him. He had a decided but by no means a presuming air, which spoke character,

and yet gave no offence. Iron-grey hair, and large, bushy whiskers, seemed appropriate accessories to the firm-knit figure of an *athlète* of sixty-five. He was easy in his conversation and manner, without any approach to elegance, and he had none of the embarrassment that might be looked for in one with such a weight of blood on his conscience, not even when he spoke on the sad subject.

But perhaps—and marvellous it is if it was so—he felt no remorse for the past; and assuredly he bore his burden lightly. He was my near neighbour, and I saw a good deal of him and his very agreeable *Comtesse*. His long residence in Germany enabled him to give me much information as to the political parties in that incongruous country. Thibaudeau was occupied in composing romances (I speak in the plural) on German subjects, historical, political, and poetical. He had two nearly finished, in neatly bound *cahiers* of manuscript, and he was preparing a third for the press. I know not if any of these works eventually saw the light. He had no qualms as to Revolutionary topics. He entered on them, when they came naturally into conversation, with a fluent indifference that at times moved my wonder. And I particularly recollect his once saying in a very off-hand way, when I referred to his having

presided in the Convention at one of the examinations of Louis XVI. at the bar, that he "had great pleasure in ordering him a chair to repose on,"—a certain mark of *politesse*, no doubt, like the bow an executioner might make to a victim. And when, on another occasion, I talked freely with the Count on the question of the sentence pronounced against the King, he assured me that he voted for his death ("without appeal and without respite," be it remembered) to save him from being torn to pieces by the people! An Irish reason I may say (without national offence)—but I would fain hope that Thibaudeau meant to imply that he expected by getting the poor condemned Louis out of the immediate grasp of the *mob*, he might give him a chance of being saved by the people.

But the vote against appeal and against respite? I greatly fear the anxiety for the King's immediate protection was joined with apprehension for the voter's personal safety. No, nothing can excuse these men. The more they have attempted to justify themselves, the deeper have they sunk in reprobation. Thibaudeau was an apologist of the worst crimes of the Committee of Public Safety, even after the destruction of Robespierre, St. Just, and Couthon. He filled many offices under the Republic and the Empire,

and was covered with distinctions which could not however conceal his notoriety.

CHAZAL, only an Imperial Baron, was more noble in his appearance (according to the ordinary idea of the air nobility ought to confer) than any of his above-mentioned colleagues of higher title. He was tall, and of rather distinguished mien; always well dressed, which was not the case with some of the others; and evidently impressed with the value of appearances. He was about twenty-seven years of age when he voted the death of Louis XVI.; but with the condition of a respite to allow time for the people to pronounce definitively on the question. He also opposed the destruction of the Girondins (in May, 1793) with whom he had in fact occasionally voted—and he denounced Marat. These facts in some small degree mollified my feelings towards the old and possibly repentant *conventionnel*. Altogether I found him the most interesting of them all; and I thought there was a tone of melancholy pervading his manners, which I wished to attribute to the memory of his far-back but then irremediable offence.

But independent of that mitigating hope, a circumstance occurred at the period of my brief and slight acquaintance with Baron Chazal, of a nature so personally shocking to him, that I

am sure I only shared the general feeling of all Brussels, in deeply deploring his great misfortune. I believe his intimate associates were few, for he was a reserved man, and general society was barred at that time against the admission of persons in his category, bearing the attaint of banishment and living in the Netherlands on sufferance.

All visitors to Brussels have seen and admired the Botanical Garden, so picturesquely placed on the face of the elevation that fronts the *Boulevard de l'Observatoire*; its terraces, basins, and walks, its rich stock of flowers and plants, and the handsome structure of glass-work stretching along the highest portion of the grounds. This place, now so finished and attractive, was inaugurated about the year 1829, or perhaps in the early part of 1830. I was one among the British residents who received an invitation to the extremely brilliant fête. In the midst of all the sounds of gaiety and enjoyment a murmur was suddenly heard—I think it was on the open terrace in front of the vestibule. There was a good deal of commotion in the group nearest the scene of disturbance. I inquired the cause, and some one mentioned that after a sharp altercation between Baron Chazal and one of his sons, a fine and spirited youth, the angry father so far forgot himself as to strike the boy.

This incident caused a painful sensation among the large and motley company. The degradation of a blow on such a public occasion was considered too severe a punishment for any ordinary offence or under any provocation. Opinions were loudly uttered to that effect. But after awhile the buzz of disapproval subsided. More agreeable excitements supervened. The company began to disperse, and I left the place for my home in the Faubourg de Namur, thinking no more of the unpleasant affair which had for awhile marred the pleasure of the evening.

According to my rather inveterate habit I sat up very late that night, and most probably into the small morning hours, reading, or writing, or cogitating. During this time, but at what precise point of it I forget, I heard the report of a pistol fired on the interior boulevard in front of the glaxis. The sound was unusual and perhaps a little startling. I looked from the window and listened awhile, but saw or heard nothing to satisfy my curiosity. No living thing was visible, and the wind slightly moving the young trees on the boulevard was the only sound. I thought no more of the matter and at last went to bed.

Early the next day, on rising, I learned the melancholy news that young Chazal, in a state

of frenzy at the disgrace inflicted on him, had wandered about the city for some time, and, having provided himself with the fatal weapon, put an end to his short and most probably troubled life, by discharging it with prompt effect against the poor body that was found dead where it fell, among some loose beams of timber lying in the open space between the wall of the King's garden and the glacis, exactly opposite my house.

When the curtain drops on such a deep and real tragedy it is not well to raise it again, or call any of the actors to the stage of life. I never saw the unfortunate Baron Chazal after that night; nor have I ever since heard or read any intimation of his after-proceedings or his fate.

Bertrand BARÈRE de Vieuzac was born at Tarbes, the 10th of September, 1755. He was consequently seventy-four years of age when I first met him in Brussels in the autumn of 1829. He has left a vile reputation to the world, and there is little to be said for him in absolute extenuation. He filled a prominent place in the history of his time. He was one of that band who dethroned and killed a king, upset a dynasty, and governed a great country, long enough to steep it in infamy and to fix on the national character an undying stain.

These are strong claims to notoriety. They ought to put any one into the front rank of the

phalanx of historic guilt. Some of Barère's associates gained and maintained that position, by deeds less atrocious than his. But they died young, cut off by those violent means which to men of their stamp might be considered natural death. They expired as they lived, in blood, in the full career of crime, terrible as well as odious, without time allowed them to degenerate into the weakness of old-age and the chances of minor turpitude. This last was the destiny of Barère. He shifted and tacked and shuddered through the **TERROR**. He was almost if not the last survivor of its dread decemvirate, for he was not finally called from earth for twelve years after the epoch of my meeting with him, dying at the great age of eighty-six in Tarbes, the place of his birth.


BARÈRE was beyond doubt the most craven and despicable of the leading regicides. His career was the concentration of fervid feebleness, the biggest words with the most puny deeds. He was the mere slave of his fellow-tyrants. He did their bidding basely, and was identified with their most startling crimes, sometimes as a principal but mostly as a tool.

Therefore it was, and by reason of his pitiful temperament even in the heyday of the horrors he shared in, that he might have had a chance of

obscurely dying out and being almost forgotten among the common herd of revolutionary culprits, had he not unwisely left behind him a couple of volumes of valueless memoirs, and found a couple of injudicious friends to edit, and one eminent writer to review them.

Macaulay has given so revolting a picture of the author that we start back affrighted, wondering if nature could really have produced such a monster. But as we read the article in the 'Edinburgh Review,' afterwards printed in Macaulay's 'Miscellaneous Works,' we are soon satisfied that we are not reading history or studying philosophy. The turbid flood of invective hurries us on, but if we pause for a moment we are even more astonished at the ferocity of the executioner than disgusted by the guilt of the criminal. The task is overdone. It is a spasmodic effort, in which the dignity of criticism is wrenched and twisted out of form, and the scourge of the furies is substituted for the sword of justice.

It would be useless to go bit by bit through the hundred pages of invective, or to criticize the critic. We are so satisfied of the truth of the main charges against his victim that we excuse the unmerciful exaggeration of his commentary. It is only when we come to the close that a sense



of re-action is felt, and that we involuntarily long for some redeeming trait in a portrait so entirely loathsome.

Macaulay says that Barère "had not a single virtue nor even the semblance of one." Yet Barère was admitted on all hands to have been, up to the age of forty-four, when he entered the Convention, and for some time after, a man of refined tastes, amiable manners, and philanthropic views. He was never without friends, personal and political.

Macaulay admits that "in his own province he retained some of his early popularity. The mountaineers of Gascony stood by him in his adversity and his disgrace." The Department of the Upper Pyrenees chose him as a member of the Council of Five Hundred, which body rejected him on the ground of his having been proscribed; and the people of Argélès named him as a candidate for the legislative body. On Bonaparte's elevation to power as First Consul, Barère was received at the Luxembourg, "and it is said" (Macaulay, p. 187) "that Bonaparte was inclined to admit him into the Council of State." He was no doubt in intimate private relation with the Consular Government as journalist and pamphleteer until 1807. From that year till 1814 he lived in obscurity. But on Napo-

leon's return from Elba and during the Hundred Days, Barère again emerged into public life, and was chosen by his native district as member of the Chamber of Representatives. He met there many of his old colleagues of the Convention. He took an active part in the debates, was heard with consideration on several important subjects; and his last appearance in that assembly was when, after the battle of Waterloo, he proposed the putting forth a high-flown proclamation, with allusions to the pass of Thermopylæ and in the old style of Conventional eloquence, which Macaulay designates as "rhetoric worthy of a school-boy, scurrility worthy of a fishwife."

Among the portraits which embellish Lamar-tine's 'Histoire des Girondins' are two, genuine likenesses no doubt, which particularly struck me, from being not only highly characteristic of each individual, but as remarkable contrasts in themselves of the two men and their separate natures.

Barère is represented as of mature middle age, in the ordinary civilian's dress of the time (about 1793), only that he is girded with a sash, *en profile*, haranguing from the tribune (it may be of the Convention or possibly the Jacobin Club) with an excited expression of countenance, ardent gesture, and an air of almost furious energy.

St. Just is taken sitting, a full front, in the costume of a military commissioner, uniform coat and plumed hat, features almost boyish, handsome and amiable in look, a striking likeness to, but still more pleasing than, the portraits of Bonaparte at the same age, twenty-four.

Both the men in these engravings appear to me as actors in the terrible tragedy of their everyday life. Barère, by nature mild, timid, and temporizing, is seen in all the violence of stage effect, ranting and tearing the passion he descants on to tatters. St. Just, a human tiger—a moral volcano, whirlwind, cataract—or all combined in his brief and frightful career, wears as calm and soothing an air as Patience itself, smiling compassionately at the grief he has brought home to thousands of his fellow-creatures.

Physiologists might well indeed be puzzled by the study and comparison of the two portraits. It is Phrenology alone that is not at fault in its inquiries. And if there exist anywhere authentic busts of those two notorious men, it would be a true service to science and philosophy to submit them to the examination of some eminent disciple of Gall and Spurzheim.

Soon after the election of the first Chamber of Deputies after the return of Louis XVIII., under the safeguard of the Allied Armies, the decree of

proscription, called the Act of Amnesty, before alluded to, was carried into prompt effect, and "BARÈRE" (according to Macaulay) "retired to Belgium in 1815, and resided there forgotten by all mankind till the year 1830."

Perhaps that was the case in accordance with Lord Macaulay's idea of all mankind, supposing it to comprise only what is called "the world" in the language of the great and the fashionable. It is certain that BARÈRE, old, poor, in wretched health, of horrid antecedents, and with nothing to look for in the present or the future but exile and obscurity, had little chance of being much considered, even as a worn-out lion with his teeth drawn and his claws clipped. Yet there were some persons who from various motives—curiosity, thirst of information, and even some perhaps from charity and compassion—sought as they might have hoped the repentant regicide, disinclined to let him perish in his destitution.

Among the English then sojourning at Brussels was the popular, comely, and really gallant Henry Webster, the favourite aide-de-camp who caught the Prince of Orange in his arms when he fell wounded from his horse at Waterloo. Poor Webster! he had no one near to arrest the upraised hand which dealt him his own fatal wound, his death-stroke, many years after my

last seeing him at the epoch I am now going back to. He then occupied an apartment in one of the hotels of the Place Royale, the Bellevue I think, but that is immaterial. He gave a handsome *déjeuner* one forenoon to a few friends, among whom were Sir Charles and Lady Morgan and myself.

When I entered the *salon*, I saw Lady Morgan at one of the windows, talking her best in her usual agreeable though affected way, with an old grey-headed man, of *mauvaise mine* as far as health was concerned, coughing repeatedly, yet, politely and with a well-bred and pleasing expression on his pale features, taking his part (a small one) in the colloquy. I have him before me now, in his long blue greatcoat, anciently called a *surtout*, buttoned high up, his black silk handkerchief and dark trousers, the general dress of old Frenchmen of that day, such as we used to see sunning themselves in the Tuileries Gardens or Champs Élysées, remnants of the Revolutionary time, who scorned to return to the long *queues*, *ailes de pigeon*, coats à la *queue de morue*, and muff-carrying costume of the returned emigrants, who affected the peculiar airs of the former monarchy. When once I was made acquainted with BARÈRE, strange to say perhaps, I shook his hand whenever we met without any of the nervous

twitching which the touch of his comparatively harmless colleague THOMAS would have assuredly caused me some years before.

I greatly regret that in my after-intercourse with this remarkable person I kept no regular notes of his conversations, for he had a mind of great research and was well-informed on many subjects of interest, besides possessing that store of recollections of the grand scenes of his political career, on which I am sure I might with management have drawn largely. The pen of a lively writer, a late friend of mine, has furnished a specimen of BARÈRE's communicative habits at this period, which I shall extract from the work* in which it was recorded ; leaving the reader to form his own opinion as to the amount of credence due to the then avowed sentiments of BARÈRE, when compared with his former speeches and the sanguinary deeds they were meant to justify.

“ I was introduced to Barère as he was walking up and down and to and fro in the streets of Brussels. He is cadaverously pallid, about middle size, his hair almost white, his eyes grey, and I need hardly add infirm at the age of seventy-five. He complained much of the electric state of the

* Visit to Germany and the Low Countries in the years 1829, 1830, and 1831. By Sir Arthur Brooke Faulkner.

air affecting his breathing. He would not allow that his health had suffered in the least by his exertions in political life, though 'he worked hard,' he said; 'but the effort was not injurious to him. It was only an *excitation morale*, in which the ardour of his mind carries a man forward without experiencing any bodily ill.' He soon became fluent and talkative. The rapid glances he took at history, as he touched desultorily on several interesting topics, showed a memory wholly unimpaired, and a vigorous power of combination much beyond what men are usually equal to at his advanced age.

"A remark being made on the danger of all violent popular commotions arising from excitement, such as disgraced and retarded the march of the first French Revolution; 'This,' said he, 'though to be deplored, is not a less natural phenomenon than the devastation committed by the overflowing of a Dutch dyke. Tyranny always plays the same atrocious part, and never in all history has been known to correct itself. The fault is therefore with those who cause the letting out of the waters.' The parallel he drew between England and France was nice, discriminating and impartial; and in no respect did he seem disposed to palliate either the foibles or crimes of our ancient rival, while in point of in-

telle he allowed us a decided superiority. 'The French,' he said, 'are impatient of thinking, the English indefatigable in everything they undertake, uniting equal resolution and enthusiasm in pursuit ; excellent statesmen, sound philosophers, and devoted patriots, always under the guidance of good sense and steady principles.' To all this he opposed his own countrymen as '*volages* and precipitate, carried away by every change of circumstance, or novelty of speculation, in a perpetual state of vacillation, and therefore seldom or never arriving at any sure and determinate result.' The climax was wound up by calling England the only truly civilized country in the world, accounting for this by our commercial intercourse, the moral effect of which is an expansion and elevation of mind, far above those low prejudices of which other nations are the slaves or the dupes.

"Of the American nation he spoke rather slightly. They never would arrive, he thought, to be a great people ; their maturity, like fruits that ripen too early, was too precocious. For the Germans as politicians he seemed to entertain an opinion bordering on contempt, and in illustration of his meaning was rather profuse of figure, —calling the German head the *testa tedesca* of Italian raillery ; at another time a *tête de granite* ;

and their political opinions a kind of stalactical fixation (*granitisé*) that never change when once formed.

“The reader may probably stare when he is told that it is one of Barère’s favourite positions that the world can never be civilized until the punishment of death is expunged from our Draconic codes. No human being, he contended, has the least right to take away the life of another, employing an analogous reasoning to that used by Diogenes against the Macedonian Conqueror when he stood in the philosopher’s light. . . . Of the treatment of the Dauphin he spoke as of a *crime politique* of the deepest dye. For Marie Antoinette’s memory he has neither partiality nor respect, and ascribes much of the evils of those frightful times to her intrigue in counteraction of the views of the Revolutionists. Philippe Égalité he always revered as a good man, and as a straightforward, sincere, well-wisher of his country. . . .

“If the man who ordered Lyons to be rased to the ground, and who presided at the death of Louis Capet,* is to move our surprise for his principles of humanity already alluded to, he will probably appear no less out of character when I

* A loose phrase, not in accordance with the fact it is applied to.

mention that he deprecated with as cordial an earnestness all warfare save the purely defensive.

“‘Until aggressive wars shall cease, the world,’ he said, ‘must continue in a state of barbarism.’ When asked if these had always been his sentiments? he promptly answered in the affirmative. ‘I had nothing to do,’ said he, ‘with sanctioning the operations of the French arms beyond the ancient settled limits of the kingdom.’”

Some of these passages remind me of scraps of talk which I myself had from time to time with BARÈRE. He frequently maintained that the prolonged age of himself and so many of his colleagues was to be attributed to the violent excitements of their troubled career; and that it was the sluggard temperament in idle men that caused the brain to stagnate and die. Speaking of Marie Antoinette, he gravely and earnestly, and with an air of mystifying simplicity, assured me that “*elle n’aimait pas la Révolution!*” and he once took occasion, in alluding to the barbarous treatment of her poor little son, to vindicate himself from all blame in the matter of his death, impressing on me his own “absence from Paris at the time.”

Thus he feebly endeavoured to strengthen himself on some isolated points relative to which he stood in no particular odium; but I never ven-

tured needlessly to lacerate his feelings, by recalling facts of which he had been one of the mainsprings, or phrases become historic which had notoriously passed from his lips.

“*L'arbre de la Liberté ne pouvait croître s'il n'était arrosé du sang d'un roi,*” on the trial of Louis XVI.

“*Il faut battre monnaie sur la Place de la Révolution,*” where the guillotine stood *en permanence*.

“*Non, non, il n'y a que les morts qui ne reviennent pas,*” when he proposed that the English garrisons of Condé and Valenciennes should be put to the sword if they did not surrender within twenty-four hours.

And the truly demoniac decree of the Convention of September 5, 1793, founded on his report, “*que la Terreur était à l'ordre du jour !*”

These were the emphatic sentences of his condemnation, self-pronounced, and from which there is no appeal.

At the moment of coming to the conclusion of this sketch, I find among some scattered papers in an old portfolio—the remnants of literary memoranda saved from the pillage of my house in Brussels in 1830 by Dutch troops and Belgian *braves*—two pages loosely scribbled, which I will now transcribe, as a genuine bit of personal anecdote quite fitting and appropriate.

MEMORANDUM.

Saturday, March 6, 1830.

Had a most interesting conversation this day with BARÈRE in his lodgings. I pressed him rather closely as to the publishing of his memoirs. His table was covered with scraps of manuscript which he acknowledged to be notes of past events, and my eyes wistfully fixed on the scattered pages. As we talked I urged on him the important facts he could contribute to history relative to his terrible associates, Robespierre, Danton, St. Just, etc. He said "he would never publish anything—he despised mankind too much, and particularly the French people.—He had laboured for their liberty, and they were only fit to be slaves.—He had spent 300,000 francs out of 400,000 left him by his father.—He had striven to keep the middle path all through the Revolution, but all parties consequently betrayed and persecuted him." He added after a pause that "the memory of those days sickened him quite—that he dared not reveal what he might wish. Can I tell," continued he in a tone of impatient irony, as if his mind was escaping from deeper and more painful recollections—"can I tell that Louis XVIII., when 'Monsieur,' came every day to the bureau of which he was the *chef*, wearing the tricoloured cockade, while he was exciting the

Marquis de Favras, to his enterprise? Can I tell that when the latter was condemned, Louis privately instructed the executioner to raise the scaffold so high that Favras could not address the people? Can I tell that the present King Charles X. set fire with his own hand to the manufactory of ——?”*

After another pause—as if his mind had plunged back into the most terrible depths of its recollections—he exclaimed, with greater emphasis and a flush on his pallid cheeks, “Can I tell that one day, Robespierre came to join me and St. Just in the *Comité de Salut public*, and addressing me said, ‘*You* have been the means of overthrowing the Girondins, of destroying the *Montagne* and others—but one man remains unhurt, that mole who works in the dark, stirring up the earth, and hiding from the consequences of his intrigues—Siéyès! Why do you not attack him?’

“I replied to Robespierre that if he could bring one proof against Siéyès I would do so, but not otherwise, on mere suspicions that might do injustice to any of us—and I moved the order of the day, which got rid of the question. The next day, on my going to the Assembly,

* The blank was not filled up in my MS., nor do I remember to what the expression referred, nor its exact bearing

Siéyès, who had somehow heard of this affair, waited for me on the terrace of the Feuillants, and came up looking quite frightened.—He asked me if his name was not brought before the *Comité* the preceding day? I answered that it was, and told him what passed. *Eh bien!* He was the very first and the bitterest of my denouncers! Can I tell all these things?"

So far my memorandum. But I can well remember the sense of awe with which I looked at and listened to BARÈRE as he spoke, awe not inspired by him, the shattered wreck of a once powerful and dangerous thing—but at the vivid picture he had brought before me of that den of horror, the council-room of the dread triumvirate of which he had formed one. I thought I saw St. Just in his calm ferocity, silent because his time had not come to speak—and *strike*; Robespierre skilfully putting the first pressure on Barère to commence a new atrocity—Barère himself, the still *living* link (amazing as it was that he should be so) which joined in my imagination the other two—so many beasts of prey, ready to pounce on and tear each other to pieces when the question of their own personal safety turned up, as they had already done by Danton and so many others, and as Barère did by Robespierre and

St. Just so soon after. Coleridge in his 'Fall of Robespierre' makes Barère say in one of his soliloquies—it might have been imagined in allusion to the very scene he recounted to me—

“ I fear the Tyrant's *soul*.

When last in secret conference we met
He scowled upon me with suspicious rage,
Making his eye the inmate of my bosom.
I know he scorns me—and I feel I hate him.”

Then Siéyès, too, so nearly the victim of that conclave thirty-seven years before, whom I had seen within an hour walking safely in the sun. I seemed to have the whole party before me at once, and I never felt so much identified with the epoch that had always had so fierce a hold on my imagination.

Within four months of the date of my memorandum, chance brought me to Paris, to see the outburst of the Revolution of July—that splendid contrast with the one with whose details I was lately becoming so familiar. I returned to Brussels just in time to witness the *contre-coup* of the three glorious days of Paris. And in the very midst of the turmoil, the opening struggle in the streets, the barricades, and the preparatory din of battle, I called on Barère, who kept strictly within-doors. He looked wretchedly ill, and ill at ease. The Revolutionary air did not suit his tempera-

ment. The rude noises were like echoes of former, more appalling alarms. He could not calculate on coming events. His only wish was to escape from his banishment, for he said that even *le soleil belge était un mensonge*.

He showed me a letter lying before him, which he was on the point of folding up and dispatching to the Duke of Orléans, who had accepted the title of *Lieutenant-Général* of the Kingdom, and from whom his father's old admirer now asked a free entrance and an asylum in his native land. The letter filled one side of a sheet of paper of the then usual large square shape, in Barère's close, straight-formed, and rather firm handwriting. It may still exist among some collection of autographs of *célébrités* good and bad. I possess somewhere a small specimen of the same chirography, on a sheet of note-paper and an indifferent subject; which with the recollections here rapidly thrown off are all that remain to me of BARÈRE. The stirring events of the Belgian Revolution gave me no further opportunity of seeing him again. And it was only by the public mention of his death about a dozen years later, the announcement of his *Mémoires*, and the withering epitaph of a hundred pages from Macaulay's pen, that I ever afterwards heard of him.

Possibly some chance reader of these sketches may have seen and be inclined to make public something regarding their memorable but not heroic subject, during the close of his long career, in his final retreat, in the scenes of his childhood, with domestic connections soothing his bitter remembrance of the past. His life may not have been prolonged to its unusual span for nothing. The German proverb says "Time brings roses." It may also perhaps bring remorse and repentance; and in this particular case have softened the acquired obduracy of a heart not originally hard. And let us hope that the warm southern sun, which is a reality and not a deception, may at the last have shone on the deathbed of one, who lived so long, a miserable martyr to weakness of mind and an overwhelming destiny.

A letter extracted from an old copy of the 'Times' newspaper of January 22, 1841, just turns up, and may be appropriately added as a supplement to this paper.

BERTRAND BARÈRE DE VIEUZAC.

(To the Editor of the 'Evening Mail.')

"SIR,—The newspapers have just announced the death of this very extraordinary man at Tarbes, in his eighty-fifth year. Perhaps a short account of his political career may please your readers, especially as

it is written by a person who has known him these forty years. In 1800, when I first went to Paris, I was introduced to Barère by that well-known personage Thomas Paine. I found Barère possessed not only of sound talent, but endowed with great wit and the refined gentlemanly manners of the old school, so rare a quality in the present new school of the Barricades.

“At the commencement of the first Revolution, in 1789, Barère was a distinguished advocate at the bar of Toulouse. He also wrote several poems, for which he obtained prizes. Although not rich, he had sufficient property to enable him to live independent of his profession, especially as he married a rich lady, from whom however he was divorced in 1794. When the States-General were convoked by the Minister Calonne, Barère was chosen deputy by his townsmen. When the States-General formed themselves into a Constituent Assembly he voted with the majority and against the Court.

“It was at this period that the first independent newspaper appeared at Paris, entitled ‘Le Point du Jour’ (‘Morning-dawn,’ or ‘Daybreak’), and was edited by Barère. During the Constituent Assembly he did not make any figure, although his oratorical powers were of the first order. Having been a member of the Constituent, he could not, according to the new law, belong to the new assembly, called Legislative, which expired in 1792. Soon after the Republic was established Barère was elected a member of the Convention. During the first week of the trial of Louis XVI. he was President. They were chosen

every month, and Vergniaud was President during the remainder of the trial. When the unfortunate monarch was first introduced into the hall of the Convention, Barère very *courteously* said to him, ‘Louis Capet, asseyez-vous.’ The system of terror soon followed the atrocious murder of the King. Barère was at first attached to the Girondins, but fear made him abandon his former party. Indeed, that system of terror was felt by all—it subdued the stoutest heart of that party. That system was the order of the day, and every man, to save his neck from the guillotine, became a Terrorist. The Girondins themselves would, to save their lives, have become Terrorists. Danton, Camille Desmoulins, Tallien, Carnot, Barère, Collot D’Herbois, Billaud, De Varennes, Fouché, and even Robespierre, were all in their turn frightened at their own system. Danton and Camille Desmoulins first spoke of a change, and they fell by public clamour, that is, by the rabble, who had now become the masters. Six weeks previous to the 9th Thermidor, when Robespierre fell, he absented himself from the Committees of Public Safety and General Safety, of which I shall presently speak. His colleagues in those committees—viz. Carnot, Barère, Billaud, and Collot, imagined that Robespierre intended some *coup d’état*, as he hinted as much at the fête to acknowledge the Supreme Being. Tallien and Fouché knew that they were to be denounced as traitors—that is to say, as sturdy Jacobins. As Robespierre was now beginning to change his system, they commenced in the Convention a furious attack on Robespierre, calling him a ‘Dictator,’ ‘a Royalist,’ etc. Robespierre and his friend

and colleague St. Just (a young man of twenty-five, and who very much resembled Napoleon), attempted to speak, but were silenced by the cries of 'A bas le tyran !' 'A bas le dictateur !' 'Barère ! Barère ! à la tribune, Barère.' When Barère was thus called upon, neither he nor his friends and colleagues in the government, Collot and Billaud, had made up their minds what part to take, whether for or against Robespierre, so great was the terror. Several persons cried out, 'Those who do not speak against the tyrant will be poniarded in quitting the Convention.' Here then another system of terror prevailed, and Barère, Collot, and Billaud joined Tallien and Fouché in denouncing Robespierre ; and most certainly it was Barère who decided Robespierre's fate. However, a few months after Barère, Collot, and Billaud, were sentenced by the Convention, without even a form of trial, to be transported to Cayenne. Barère, on his way to Brest, escaped from his guard, and remained concealed in France till Bonaparte became First Consul ; Collot and Billaud were sent to Cayenne, where Collot died ; and Billaud, by order of the Consular Government, was liberated, and went to a Spanish colony, where he became a monk in the Convent of Jacobins, under the name of Padre Varenas. He was sent with other priests to Mexico, where having joined some Revolutionists in 1810, he was arrested, but made his escape to New York, where he died in 1817. But to return to Barère. He was by many persons accused of cruelty as a member of the Committee of Public Safety. Now, those who knew anything about the organization or attributes of that Committee, know

it was impossible for any of its members to indulge in feats of blood. Soon after the Republic was established the Ministries were abolished, and the business of government was carried on by two committees, viz. Public and General Safety—war, marine, and foreign relations carried on by the former—justice, finances, taxes, police, and everything relating to the interior, by the latter. Robespierre and Carnot were members of both, but Barère never belonged to the latter, therefore he could not have anything to do with the affairs of the interior. But unfortunately for Barère he was a great punster, and introduced *calembourgs* in his ministerial speeches, which were always eloquent and amusing. He therefore acquired the name of ‘the Anacreon of the guillotine.’ It was Barère, and not Bonaparte, who called the English *une nation boutiquière*—a nation of shopkeepers. The well-known Abbé Siéyès, speaking of Barère, called him ‘*le secrétaire des crimes.*’ Indeed, no one personally acquainted with him would or could accuse him of cruelty. The establishment of the Consular Government was a new era for Barère. Bonaparte secretly employed him to furnish him with all that passed between the Republic and foreign states. As Barère conducted these matters, and not a trace could be found in the archives of the Foreign Office when Bonaparte came into power, it was supposed that Talleyrand sold a great many important documents to foreign governments. Barère received 36,000 francs annually from Bonaparte. He also corrected many of the angry notes in answer to articles in foreign newspapers written by Napoleon and inserted

in the 'Moniteur.' In 1804 he established a newspaper bearing the title of 'Le Mémorial Anti-Britannique,' but it did not live long. He translated into French 'Ossian's Poems' at the desire of Napoleon, who affected to be partial to Ossian. He also translated some of Tasso's works, and wrote a book on the 'Rights of Neutrals,' and a new maritime code. When Bonaparte fell, Barère's pension fell also. During the Hundred Days he became a member of the Chamber of Deputies, but he was a silent member. Having signed the *Acte Additionnelle*, proscribing the Bourbon family, he was exiled as a regicide. He went to reside at Brussels, where he remained till the Barricade Government was established in France. He then returned to Paris, where he remained two years, and then went to his native city—Tarbes. He was chosen a member of the Ministerial Council after his return from exile. His pecuniary resources were but scanty, and the present Government allowed him a pension of about sixty pounds—not enough for a man who was formerly intimate with the Orleans *Egalité* family, and was jointly secretary of the Jacobin Club with *Egalité* the younger, now King of the French. It is certain that not a member of the two committees, excepting Danton, made money. The rapacity commenced under the Imperial Government.

"Barère has written his memoirs, which cannot fail to be highly interesting, but I doubt if they will ever be forthcoming, for in May last he wrote to a friend about them, and said—'Étant très-souffrant, je n'ai pu recueillir tous mes souvenirs des tristes et terribles époques que ma destinée m'a fait parcourir :

mais c'est de l'histoire ancienne peu propre à attirer l'attention d'une nation dont la vie, toujours occupée du présent, met en oubli le passé et n'a jamais eu d'avenir. Quand même mes quatre-vingt-cinq ans me le permettent, il me sera bien difficile de réunir mes notes et souvenirs. Je ne saurais imiter les historiens modernes de la Révolution, qui l'ont charlatanisée ou romantisée. J'aurais pu, avec vos conseils, mettre de l'ordre et de la suite à un travail qui reste informe et incomplet.'

"Barère continued a Republican. This is not to be wondered at when he saw how the present monarchy of France is based. He always said, 'We have certainly had a republic in France, but no republicans!'

"I remain yours, etc.,

"A COSMOPOLITE.

"January 19, 1841."

CHAPTER XI.

THE PYRÉNÉES.

I MUST now beg my readers to go back with me, a great many pages, some hundreds of miles, and ten or a dozen years, to the place we came from at the beginning of the last chapter.

I was then deeply engaged in the new career of literary labour, for which no one was less fitted by antecedents or less supported by association. A man without previous training, belonging to no clique or coterie, independent of party, and acting, speaking, and writing merely from his own convictions, yet who takes up his pen as the type of a profession, is like a "gentleman" farmer who cannot handle the plough, and who not knowing how to sow can scarcely be expected to reap. I lost two hundred pounds by the printing of my poem; my manuscript tragedy was "laid on the table," and had it, too, been printed it would no doubt have lain on the shelf.

I had no great encouragement—indeed there was no one to encourage me in my comparative isolation from what forms the literary world. I was too much absorbed by my home employments to mix with the provincial writers of angry politics. My chief resources beyond my own house were the field sports which never tired or palled on me, and, the growing intimacy with the characteristics of the French people, which insensibly impressed me with the notions I afterwards embodied in sundry volumes, partly fact partly fiction, in story after story, “picked up in the French Provinces,” as my title-pages truly stated.

Two or three years flowed on pleasantly, in domestic occupations, that were soothing rather than exciting. The fading past throwing a long shadow on my sunshine, and ever through its clouds one bright spot of blue twinkling, like a star of consolation if not of hope.

A stray literary Englishman came now and then into the wine country and to its great commercial mart, and I gathered the scraps of information thus afforded as to men of letters and the general gossip of the circles of London and Paris. Few of these passing visitors had names but of small note. Among them was one who astonished me by producing some little specimens of paragraph-writing in a very ordinary weekly paper to

which he contributed. He roused my emulation, and with great kindness assured me that, judging from the notes to my poetical romance, he was satisfied that I could do something in prose for some periodical if I would pluck up heart enough to try my hand. This it was that first gave me the idea of attempting two or three short sketches on different subjects; but to vary the scene and change the hot air of the sandy plains of Gascony, I made a move with all my belongings towards the mountains, and I was soon in the heart of the magnificent ranges that separate France from Spain.

With my dog and gun and Co. (which Co. consisted of a knapsack, powder-flask, and shot-pouch) I formed a wandering partnership, that traversed valleys, mounted peaks, and rested in ravines; meeting many small adventures which left their imprint on my memory, for after-thought and after-telling. This was really a time of infinite enjoyment. And I cannot resist noting some of the memoranda relative to the glorious country I so revelled in, in a more permanent form than I have done before, and illustrative of scenes where certain of my imaginings found a local habitation a long time ago.

Louis the Fourteenth's famous apothegm, "*Il n'y a plus de Pyrénées*;" unprophetic as it was

in its figurative sense, might seem to have been taken in downright earnest by the mass of English who long after his time swarmed over the Continent, trampling the snows of Alps and Apennines, yet neglecting altogether this splendid chain of mountains, stretching from the Mediterranean to the ocean. The victorious career of Wellington, in a succession of battles, satisfied the nation at large that the Pyrénées were not really annihilated by the dictum of the sumptuous despot above quoted. But when those victories opened the road it was scarcely sought for, except by a few veteran campaigners who hastened to the baths of Baréges, to cure their gunshot wounds, or occasional straggling victims of bile or *ennui*, who dropped for a week or two into the summer gaieties, or the *eaux thermales* of Bagnères, St. Sauveur, or Cauteretz.

Many French and Spanish writers had done ample justice both historical and poetical to the beauties of this region. Ramond, the most profound and industrious of them, gave an account of his hardy enterprises and scientific observations in the last century. The physiologists who preceded him left rather dry details of their proceedings—measurement of the mountains, analysis of mineral waters, and geological inquiries. De Candolle, Flamichon, Vidal, and

some others, are the names best known in connection with these subjects, besides De Plantade, who in 1748, at seventy years of age, died suddenly near the summit of the Pic du Midi, in the very act of measuring its proportions. More recent writers, such as Palasson, Charpentier, Thiers, and some who have written anonymously form a large fund for information and amusement. But Ramond's volumes are the best for both reader and tourist, though his style is sometimes pompous and long-winded; and Englishmen must pardon his assertion that our island in his days could produce but one eatable kind of cheese, a *pendant* to the celebrated libel as to our "twenty religions and but one sauce."

Having long ago embodied in works before alluded to,* some of the feelings arising from a close association with those mountains, I must not here risk the reproach of tautology, but be satisfied with a rather meagre sketch. Later writers than those I have referred to have entered on descriptive details and fanciful speculation about the Pyrénées, their origin, the transformations they have undergone; their geological history, and the philosophic uses to which these studies may

* Highways and Byways, Caribert the Bear Hunter, The Birth of Henri Quatre, The Cagot's Hut.

be turned. One really clever French author, H. Taine, with an acute but eccentric intellect, labours in his *Voyage aux Pyrénées* to raise this great chain of hills still higher than their natural elevation, by pronouncing them, with all their combination of chemical forces, mineral substances, and the affinities which have produced the soil, rocks, the lava, and the crust of earth which covers it, as the true and rightful masters of the earth, while man the usurper is but a fleeting excrescence composed of a little fixed air, and growing by chance in a cleft of the everlasting granite.

This is no doubt bold theory, and those who understand may sympathize with it. But I confess myself unable to do either, my views of natural products and all their beautiful, but wayward irregularities are less lofty. I see them but as accessories to the still nobler creation of humanity in its visible and sovereign existence. I admire and love them as formed to elevate not debase man's nature. I plant my foot on the earth and look from its highest pinnacles, as one atom of the great Power which makes man lord of the universal soil. It is made to fructify for his use. Its grandest scenes are for his enjoyment. It is the platform on which he stands to raise his thoughts on high; and all

its combinations of sublimity and beauty are subservient to man's genius, his industry, and his taste.

From the time of the Romans, who were attracted by the metallic and mineral wealth of the country, the Pyrénées have afforded a succession of most interesting historical events, including the passage of the Saracens in the seventh century for the invasion of France, the birth and early education of Henry the Fourth, the hero of the French monarchy, the memorable actions of the British armies, and the convulsive struggles of civil war till a much later period.

The celebrity of the waters, the *eaux bonnes* and the *eaux chaudes*, is notorious from the days when Monsieur de Thou, in 1582, drank five-and-twenty glasses at a time, "*plutôt par plaisir que par nécessité*," as is testified by the chronicle. But he was far outdone by one of his German servitors who swallowed daily fifty glasses in an hour, for no recorded purpose but to leave posterity in wonderment at the amazing capacity of stomach enjoyed by masters and men in those good old times. But apart from all medicinal properties the waters of the Pyrénées combine every attraction for the admirers of liquid nature, from the Cascade of Gavarnie, the highest in Europe, to the gushing rivers and flower-fringed rivulets

which gurgles through this region of enchantment.

It is scarcely fair even if it were not very difficult to qualify scenery by comparison. The varieties of nature present themselves in myriads of exquisite aspects, from the stupendous elevations of Switzerland to the cultivated swamps of Holland. Each judged by each would give an imperfect notion of the enjoyment which all are calculated to convey. The anatomy of sensation does not furnish a more morbid mistake than that unhappy instinct which cheeks the current of enthusiasm with the *but's* and *ifs* of the nervous system, and cuts short the admiration of beauty, either in nature or art, by some depreciating allusion to the distant or the past. Science may compare and contrast; but sentiment is not so cold-blooded or fastidious. The sense of enjoyment revels in the charms of all creation; and, like the Deity of whom it is a direct and divine emanation, it finds in succession that "all is good." We must not therefore attempt any comparison between the Pyrénées and the Alps, the hills of Scotland and Wales, or measure the beauties of Windermere by those of Loch Katrine or Killarney.

The Pyrénées may be profoundly studied in relation with the other great European chains, as

regards their snows and glaciers, their influence on animal and vegetable life, the effects of their geographical position on the moral condition of their inhabitants, and the part they occupy in the great design of the physical world. But as few travellers and no mere tourists are likely to resort to them with views of that nature, I strongly recommend all visitors to view them with unreserved delight, forgetting that the Maladetta is one-third less lofty than Mont Blanc, as in gazing on the latter we need not worry ourselves with the recollection that the Cimboraço is one-fourth higher than it. There exists in the Pyrénéan chain, which covers an extent of upwards of two hundred miles in length and between fifty and sixty in breadth, every possible variety of mountain scenery on the grandest and the most lovely scale; pics of ten or eleven thousand feet high, glaciers, eternal snows, cascades, lakes, forests, caverns, interspersed with plains of abounding fertility.

Having myself spent several months in these delicious haunts, penetrating their mysteries, and peopling them with beings of my own creation when the real population fell short of my requirements, I may be excused for thus wishing to advertise their merits. The publicity given of later years to the attractions of this wide space of

country has season by season added to the number of visitors ; and it was with no small pleasure that I could reflect that I had some share in encouraging the settlement of British residents in the towns and villages. Pau, for instance, one of the most delightful situations in point of climate, landscape, and the material economy of life, could not before my visit count a single British resident ; but on my recommendation two families decided on removing there from Bordeaux, and it soon became the head-quarters of those scattered colonies which carry English manners, language, virtues, and failings far into the recesses of the Pyrénéan chain.

The valetudinarian, the botanist, the sportsman, the old and infirm who seek health in a languid change of scene, the young and hardy who find it in adventurous exercise, may all be amply indemnified for the trouble of an excursion so much out of the way of commonplace voyagers. The two Bagnères, de Bigorre and de Luchon, and Cauteretz used to be the most fashionable of the watering-places, for the birds of passage of all nations, who flutter from place to place in search of the dissipation on the suction of which they live, and by invalids or fancied invalids who would renew the fountains of life at the springs of *le salut* or *la santé*, or exudate the

ill-humours of the gaming or dining table by plunging into the sudatory baths.

Baréges, in its wild and savage valley, is the resort of the real sufferers "from sabre or from shot," or from other of those physical miseries accumulated by industrious excesses which the mineral waters have the power to assuage. Sentiment and romance might prefer to nestle in the secluded picturesqueness of St. Sauveur or the village of Eaux Bonnes. And as for the geologist, botanist, or those intrepid idlers whose pursuit is bear, wolf, or izard hunting, the remote gorges and rugged crags of the far-off hills are their natural resort. In short, all tastes may find fitting resources in the fifty valleys of unrivalled rural wealth, and the ranges of gigantic mounds where the imagination of Ariosto had a worthy field.

The political interest excited by the civil wars in Spain and the share taken by Englishmen in its mountain exploits attracted great attention to those scenes during the stirring events of the Carlist and Christino struggle. Zumalacarregui, Espartero, and Evans, with their adventurous followers, were the main figures inserted by fancy in the region of ravine and torrent. It is impossible not to associate living actors with the scene of their doings; and it is by an admixture of

human illustration that sympathy is secured for inanimate nature. Mere description of scenery, or general details of manners, or abstract reasoning on character fail to rivet the reader's attention beyond a short and vigorous sketch. Even the best landscape painters are aware of this. They let an insulated tree, or rock, or waterfall stand alone on its intrinsic merits. But when they would give a notion of *extent* they know that something human is required; and when conscious of their own inability to execute this well, they employ some brother-artist to throw in the figures of animal life which form the great link in the chain between observation and admiration. In books it is perhaps of small importance whether the characters be actual men and women or the creatures of fancy, so that they be depicted with sufficient skill to excite an interest in them and their adventures; an interest which is then certain to be shared by the scenes in which they have figured. It is thus that the descriptive portion of works of fiction cling so closely to the memory, and cause a longing to see with our own eyes the spot we have identified with even imaginary beings, and which their unreal existence has made famous.

Imbued with this feeling I myself abstained from attempting anything in the way of descrip-

tion of the sites I am now treating of, until in after-times I was induced to revert to them in connection with the stories which they illustrated.*

The existence of the Cagots as a separate race, and the great moral disfigurement of those countries, is one of the most extraordinary mysteries of Civilization. The elaborate researches of many writers, De Gebelin, De Marca, Palassour, and others, have failed to elucidate the enigma of which the Cagots are the *mot*. History and Philosophy are alike interested in the inquiry relative to those unfortunate pariahs whose origin is lost in the labyrinths of time, and whose existence defies the traces of tradition. I must avoid falling into the error of quoting from myself, or I should go a little deeper into this subject, which I have in a small degree illustrated, though not developed, incidentally to one of those Pyrenean stories before referred to.†

My wanderings among the mountains allowed me but few opportunities of mixing with the gay society of Bagnères, which was the favourite resort of the fashionable "excursionists" from Spain as well as the southern departments of France, with a large sprinkling, of course, of English tourists,

* Highways and Byways. First, Second, and Third Series.

† The Cagot's Hut. Highways and Byways, Third Series.

for where are they not to be found? Among the latter I remember Mr. and Lady Griselda Teekel, she a sister of the eccentric Lady Hester Stanhope, and a most agreeable woman, with no tinge of singularity. And the most remarkable among the men were Sir Samford Whittingham, a gallant General in the Spanish service, and the great tragedian, John Kemble, very entertaining, and *distingué* in manner and appearance, still somewhat of an actor, although he had given up the stage and soon afterwards removed altogether from life's busy scene, in the retreat in Switzerland which he chose as his final resting-place. Kemble was then far down on his decline, in delicate health, but showing none of the actual infirmities of age. He had evidently renounced all those convivial habits, and their attendant failings, which used to be attributed to him in former days. He maintained his fine personal appearance to the last, and he occasionally turned out in the costume so dear to English gentlemen of his time, blue tail coat, brass buttons, buff waistcoat, leather breeches, and top-boots. I think the late Duke of Newcastle and Sir Francis Burdett were about the last men of mark who indulged in that exploded and unbecoming dress in the streets of London. It had succeeded to powder and pig-tails, and was in its turn superseded by the tight

pantaloons and Hessian boots, a straggling specimen of which may even now be seen lingering in our public places. Wonderful are the efforts made by the vexed imaginations of men as well as women, to vary, and twist, and distort taste, and disfigure the human frame by its indispensable accessory of dress, which they find it so hard to leave simple and unartificial without degenerating into the rude or coarse. But this is a subject which has occupied the world since the first breath of Zephyr or the first whisper of instinct taught Adam and Eve the comfort of guarding against cold and doing it modestly; and I have no doubt that this very moment there are some pale reflections of the Brummels and D'Orsays, torturing their fancy with the notion of a new-cut shooting-jacket or paletot, for to those poor appliances is the sublime art of tailoring now reduced. I never read the 'Sartor Resartus' of Carlyle or Hazlitt—I forget which—nor Dr. Doran's more recent essay under the quaint title of 'Men and their Habits,' although I am told he did me the honour of opening his popular work by a quotation of some slight observations on dress from a book of my own.*

It is said history does not repeat itself. I think that dress does so in a certain degree. And

* Jacqueline of Holland.

at this very epoch there are strong symptoms of that tendency in the way that women wear their hair, *à l'Impératrice* (which means *à la Marie Antoinette without powder*) or in bandeaux like the nymphs and goddesses of Grecian art, and the manner in which they encumber their poor persons with those bloated excrescences called crinoline, which is but the odious old hoop revived, and only wanting the stiff stomacher, and preposterous *toupée* to be in keeping with the grotesque barbarisms of last century. Every season sees some spasmodic effort at change in bonnets, hats and caps, some for better some for worse. But variety must be sought as surely as, according to Benedick, "the world must be peopled." And though many an abortion and many an ill-shaped and ill-favoured production be the result, still the "fair proportions" of the human form preponderate, and draperies will be sure to adapt themselves again to its shape, as they did in ancient times, when sculpture had the freshness of youth and taste was pure.

Yes, I have no doubt the habits of former days will in every sense return and depart, come and go, as the world rolls on and the seasons revolve; and that whatever is good, bad, or indifferent will reappear as it has disappeared, and be new born as surely as it has died out. I wonder

when the time—the inevitable time, will come round for duelling being re-established as an institution of refined society among us. The wisdom of our ancestors is not evoked as often or as reverentially as it used to be. Their wit is not so much in fashion either. Their faults and their follies are somewhat out of date. But eloquence may come back to Parliament, repartee to society, bumpers and hobnobbing to social meetings. Swords may be worn again, and the use of the pistol not left to brutal butcheries with five-barrelled revolvers in the disrupted States of America.

The *à-propos* of all this may be questionable to my readers who perhaps are thinking of *les bottes*, topped or Hessian. But there is method in the madness of irrelevance, and I have really stumbled into this strain of speculation, from the recollection of a remarkable single combat that took place in Bagnères during the time I was there, and which I may now give an account of as an instance of the use as well as the abuse of duelling.

An Irish gentleman, whose name like my own began with G and ended with N, was certainly one of the most amiable, and least quarrelsome among the visitors. He neither drank nor gambled, nor talked politics nor scandal, the great

provocatives to disputation and ill-blood, and he lead a most quiet and domestic life with a young and pretty helpmate, as unlikely as her husband to excite any feeling that might involve him in danger.

Mr. G——n one day strolled into the public billiard-room with a friend of his, a Lieutenant in the British Navy. They found a table disengaged, took up their queues, and began to play. Scarcely had they commenced their game when two or three Frenchmen of good appearance came in, and one of them, a young man of a military air, placed himself close to Mr. G——n, stared hard at him, followed his different movements, and watched every stroke he made, with a marked and most troublesome attention. The player did not know what to make of it, but smilingly said something to his friend as to the singularity of the stranger's behaviour. The other thought it equally odd; and as it was persevered in for some minutes longer, Mr. G——n felt irritated, stopped, turned short, and begged his friend (for he did not himself speak French) to ask the meaning of the conduct now evidently intended as a personal insult. The Lieutenant, fortunately a man of great coolness and of some experience in such affairs, fulfilled his mission with politeness, telling the Frenchman that he was convinced he

had mistaken Mr. G——n for some other person, as he could have no reason for pursuing so offensive a line of conduct to a gentleman who had never before seen him.

“*Pardon ! Monsieur,*” replied the Frenchman, with perfect *sang-froid* and an air of provoking *politesse*. “I am not at all mistaken.—I know who Monsieur G——n is quite well, and I beg you will do me the honour to tell him *de ma part* that he is a *calomniateur* and a *coquin* ; and there is my card, so that he may know where to find me in ten minutes from this time—and these two gentlemen are my friends.”

It was not easy to translate all this to G——n without rousing him to knock down his unknown insulter with the queue which he still held in his hand. For mild and humane men are at times very subject to an access of rage on great provocation. He was astounded. He knew the meaning of the two epithets evidently applied to him. But he still believed as his friend had done that he had been mistaken for some one else.

“Let us go out and think what is to be done,” said he to his friend. They took up their hats and went out on the promenade (I forget its name) in which the CAFÉ-BILLARD stood. Half the *beau monde* of Bagnères were walking or lounging about, ladies and gentlemen together. The

two friends, arm-in-arm, took a couple of turns, discussing the strange and embarrassing occurrence, when suddenly the three Frenchmen met them and stopped; and the one whose behaviour had so outraged Mr. G——n deliberately spat in his face—a beastly form of insult then rather national in France (and very lately resorted to at a scientific meeting in London by a travelled foreigner, and to his own great disgrace)—saying,

“I hope you understand *that*, if I was not sufficiently explicit just now. *That* requires no interpreter.”

G——n rushed at the fellow—he had disherited himself of his title if he was a gentleman born—but before he could strike a blow the two companions and some other persons interfered.

“There is nothing now for it but an immediate meeting—explanation or apology are out of the question. Let’s follow them!” exclaimed G——n, as the Frenchmen walked away.

“Stop a bit,” replied the Lieutenant. “I’ll settle the matter in a minute,” and he stepped after the party. He returned almost immediately to G——n. “It’s all arranged—they are gone to the old burying-ground—come to my lodgings—my pistols are there—you must shoot him dead.”

The few words struck wildly on G——n. They fell with an ominous sound on his mind. He had never fired a pistol in his life. The place of meeting was awfully suggestive. The name on the card was that of a young officer *en disponibilité*, a notorious duellist—the pest of the neighbourhood—a crack shot who had killed and wounded several, and insulted most wantonly almost every one he had quarrelled with. G——n felt himself a doomed man. He thought of his wife, just then expecting him at home for their usual walk. “Come quicker,” said he to his friend. “There’s not a moment to be lost—*she* will be sure to hear of it—every one saw what passed—somebody will no doubt tell her. For God’s sake make haste before the police can know anything.”

Within ten minutes the whole party were on the ground, an old and almost abandoned churchyard that lies on the rise of the hill towards the *Salut*; several large gaps in the dilapidated wall admitting the groups that followed the combatants silently and anxiously.

G——n’s friend had picked up an acquaintance as they had hurried on, and engaged him to stand by him as the second *témoin*. He acceded willingly to the request. He did not dislike a fight, and he said openly he hoped to heaven

G——n would rid the neighbourhood of its worst disgrace. Poor G——n shrugged his shoulders, cast up his eyes towards heaven, and pushed on without saying a word.

The conditions were soon arranged. Two lines were drawn at ten paces apart, a walking-cane was laid down on each. The combatants were placed each at ten paces further back than the respective lines, so that they stood thirty paces distant from each other. They were then left to their own discretion to fire when they pleased, with liberty to advance each before doing so up to the respective canes, but on no account to put a foot beyond them, so that in any case they could not approach each other closer than ten paces; and supposing them to reserve their fire till they got to that short distance, even then they might stand, take aim, and shoot without any signal whenever they chose.

This was a well established way of settling these affairs in France, trying to the nerves of the coolest and most experienced duellist, terrible to the uninitiated.

Each of the parties were provided with pistols. Those of the Frenchman were of ordinary make, rather old and battered, and both of them marked with two or three slight notches, to note the number of times they had been used by their owner,

G——n's antagonist. He poised one of them caressingly in his hand. But when his eye fell on the beautiful English feather-spring weapons which the Lieutenant took calmly out of their case, it glistened with delight and ferocious longing.

"I must fight with one of those," said he.

"No, Monsieur," replied the Lieutenant; "we are not to provide you with a weapon." And he explained to the impatient G——n the request and his refusal.

"Oh! let him have it, for God's sake,—what matter? Do go on quickly. She will be sure to hear of this, and—"

"Take it, Sir," said the Lieutenant; "my friend is too generous."

"He'll be a dead man in two minutes," was the fierce and ruffianly reply, as he snatched the proffered weapon; and the four pistols were loaded by the seconds.

"Be steady, for heaven's sake. On no account fire till you both reach the canes—the short distance is your only chance," said the Lieutenant, as he placed a pistol in G——n's hand. The latter scarcely knew how to hold it. An instinct of common sense made him point it straight before him; but he was afraid to put his finger on the trigger, for he was warned that the slightest

touch on the feather spring would cause it to go off prematurely.

The Frenchman flourished his weapon, levelled it with a theatrical air, called out loudly some words that G——n did not understand, but all was done clearly with the object of throwing him off his guard and hurrying him into firing at the furthest distance, with a certainty of missing. Failing in this design, the Frenchman then stepped rapidly up to the cane, his barrier, his arm at full length, and G——n could see into the barrel of the pistol levelled straight at him. He had just presence of mind to reflect that a good shot at twenty paces, the distance now between them, was sure to hit his man—while he would be as certain to miss—so by a sudden impulse he *ran* impetuously up to his barrier, giving the idea to all the spectators that he had utterly lost his head, and was rushing full tilt against his foe, whom he covered straightly enough. So thought the latter. And he, astonished and startled by the extraordinary movement of his intended victim, unconsciously pulled the trigger with a jerk—the sensitive feather-spring threw the bullet wide of its mark—and at the same instant the report of G——n's pistol told that he too had fired, having stopped firmly and steadily at the barrier ; and with a scream of agony, the despe-

rate duellist bounded into the air, shot through the brain, and he dropped forward stone dead, on one of the weed-covered mounds which dotted the burial-ground.

G——n stood utterly stupefied. He knew no difference between life and death, or who had fallen, who escaped. From first to last he had given himself up as lost. He never dreamt of killing his enemy with his unpractised hand, nor of having a chance of safety from the unerring skill opposed to him. There was now no time for thought. His friend rushed up to him.

“Come, come on, come on, don’t you see the wretch is dead? The people will tear us to pieces.”

And so it would have been, had not the two friends bolted through the crowd that, insatiably curious, thronged round the corpse; and before they could disengage themselves to look for the two foreigners they had scrambled over the broken wall, ran through some narrow lanes, and found shelter in Mr. G——n’s house, where he met his wife, entirely ignorant of the fearful scene that had been acted. The second *témoin* had escaped by another route.

Almost immediately the yells of the people were heard outside. Their fury against the Englishmen was roused to the highest pitch, and

could not be controlled by the few gentlemen who were present at the catastrophe, and not one of whom lamented it, for the lot had fallen on him who deserved it and who left none behind to mourn for him. G——n and his friend fastened up the doors and windows as best they could ; but they would not have long resisted the assaults of the crowd, had not fortunately a small detachment of mounted gendarmerie galloped up, and surrounded the house. The officer commanding it demanded admission, which was gladly given to him. His conduct was admirable. His first care was to tranquillize the lady, who, like a true woman, was calm, resolute, and active for her husband's safety, generous and unselfish for her own. The officer assured her of his protection and also undertook to guarantee the safety of the Lieutenant ; but as he was unable to answer for that of the principal in the homicide, knowing the nature of the infuriated mob and the state of national feeling at the time, he devised the only plan for his escape, in case they overpowered the half-dozen gendarmes and forced an entrance. He therefore called on one of his men to come inside while the rest sat in their saddles, sabre in hand ; and he made G——n at once change clothes with the soldier-policeman. This was done quietly and speedily. Then leading him to the door,

he saw him mount the horse of the man he personated, putting an apparent letter hastily prepared into his hand, professedly for the magistrate of the town. G——n well played his part. He rode calmly through the people, who offered no remark, trotted along in the direction he was told to take, and very soon left Bagnères behind him, relying on the courage and the chivalry of the Frenchman who saved him, to protect his wife, and the friend less compromised than he was.

He was joined on the same evening by both those objects of his solicitude, who came under safe escort, and he turned his back for ever on the place where he had seemed to have experienced such a fearful dream. And now comes the explanation of the startling event.

Mr. G——n, naturally for a man of his quiet habits, was fond of reading. He was a subscriber to the circulating library ; and he one day had in his turn a volume that touched on the great war against Napoleon, and contained some sentence rather disparaging to the French army in connection with the battle of Toulouse. Some reader of the book had written in pencil a short remark on the passage, approving its tone and enforcing its truth by a severe epithet. Mr. G——n scarcely observed this if he saw it at all ; but he in due

time returned the book to the library and forgot all about it.

Passing from one subscriber to another, the volume fell into the hands of the young fire-eater whose unhappy fate I have just related. Hurried away by passion, by furious hatred of all Englishmen, so indiscriminate that he cared not on whom he vented it, he rushed to the circulating library, inquired who among the subscribers had last had the volume, was answered vaguely, but the name of Mr. G——n was mentioned as one of the last, and the person in the shop pointed out that gentleman who happened to be passing at the time. That was enough. The self-doomed victim, the virtual suicide rushing on his fate, darted out, engaged his two attendant friends to accompany him, followed the two unsuspecting Englishmen into the billiard-room—and the reader knows the rest.

Now I said that this circumstance was illustrative of the use and abuse of duelling. First as to the abuse. There was an unoffending gentleman without the shadow of a provocation, absolutely forced because he *was* a gentlemen to meet an utter stranger in mortal combat, without notice or preparation of any kind, to stand to be shot at, or to take the life a fellow-creature and risk his own, in obedience to that law of honour

then unrepealed even in England, which made it imperative on every one of a certain standing in society so to act under such circumstances, or to forfeit all claim to respect or consideration, to be virtually degraded, shunned, and despised as "a coward and a blackguard"—for that was the formula adopted against whoever might brave the world's opinion on the point and dare to act on his own if opposed to it. This was beyond doubt a monstrous evil, a rampant tyranny, an intolerable nuisance. How it had ever been established or admitted by rational beings in such an exaggerated form it is hard to conceive. No doubt its excessive stringency came on by degrees, growing worse and worse every day until men got so accustomed to it that they not only submitted to but actually liked it—as I believe to be the case as regards the slavery of custom in almost all its forms.

Now, to show the reverse of the medal, and detail the uses of duelling, as one might descant on the "uses of adversity," would be a bold undertaking in the present state of public feeling on the subject. For the tide is still on the ebb, carrying away whole centuries of custom and habit, and everyday practice in the now obnoxious system. I think I have somewhere in these volumes touched on the question before,

and I dare say I shall be tempted to revert to it again, as recollections of this old fashion of fighting rise up. But I have no wish to be ranked among the advocates of what is quite accepted as a barbarous custom, deserving the reprobation of all thinking people. All I mean to say is that for the protection of society, for the putting down and punishing of coarse, ill-bred, brutal men the liability of being called out, shot at, and killed was a great barrier; and that, as in the case of the experienced ruffian whose death I have recorded, it was not amiss that a code existed to which he and such as he were amenable, the prompt action of which struck down occasionally such offenders as *the law* could not effectually reach. But saying even this is probably saying too much while the current of public opinion is still flowing outwards. When the tide returns and duelling is brought back on its swelling wave, reasons in its favour will be as unnecessary as they would now be fruitless. And it may be enough to say that without actually approving of this form of wild justice, it may be permitted to consider it as one of those deplorable accessories of an ever unsettled civilization, and of that imperfection which is the fate of society and the doom of human nature.

Having rather overstayed my intended time in

the Pyrénées, almost overwalked myself on many occasions in their loftiest and most distant points, and overloaded my scrap and sketch books with materials not to be at that time turned to account, I wended my way again towards Bordeaux, and was soon literally under my own fig-tree and in the shade of my own vines.

Literary longings had by this time taken entire possession of me, and I thirsted for the draughts to be drawn only at sources of great eminence. I could find books enough in a provincial town, and the public library of Bordeaux was well supplied. There were specimens of human nature sufficient to furnish matter for any amount of real or romantic portraiture. But the great elements of social intercourse, with persons of tastes and objects similar to my own, were only to be met with in some great capital, and I resolved to remove to Paris, a rather serious step under all the domestic influences of my then position.

I took my departure from Bordeaux in the first steam-vessel that had left its quays and on the first trial trip of that vessel, and after some mishaps and misadventures reached La Rochelle, thence proceeded to Tours, and after three months' residence there to Paris, where I regularly installed myself as one of the working men in the great Republic of Letters, though under the wings of the French monarchy.

CHAPTER XII.

PARIS AS A RESIDENCE.

THE aspect of all things in Paris, since the time of my first hasty visit above three years before ; seemed entirely altered when I actually settled down there as a domiciled resident. The fact was, it was I myself who was changed, so much so that in a moral point of view I might have almost doubted my identity. Instead of a careless, wild, and *unstitched* line of conduct (to adopt a French expression), I set about things with steadiness and assiduity, avoided loss of time which so often involves loss of character, and at once started on a new course befitting my new position. I was literally beginning my education in its really essential points. I had learned little more than the A B C of life. Light scholarship, chiefly forgotten ; classical recollections, brought to no practical account ; desultory reading, without plan or result ; some experience of men and

manners—the grammar and syntax of that elaborate language called knowledge of the world. Many people go on to their life's end without making much more progress than that. Some learn to spell human nature; a few to read it; and even then there are many—and I confess myself one—who can never understand it.

There are certain shrewd intelligences who constantly watch, doubt, and disbelieve—

“ It is their nature's plague
To spy into abuses, and shape faults
That are not.”

In that consists their vaunted skill. They are delighted when they do meet with falsehood and hypocrisy; nothing is so pleasant to them as an unpleasant discovery; they are never so much disappointed as when they are not deceived. Sceptics as to frankness, honour, and good faith, the only chance of being believed by them is to tell them a lie, for they have no instinct of truth. These are the unhappy spirits who are said to be good judges of human nature—great diplomatists, eminent statesmen. But they are the lecturers whose courses I should decline to follow, whose theories I abhor, and whose practice I repudiate. Their mind is a crooked inversion of what man's mind ought to be. They are wily in their generation, not wise. But there is a medium quality of brain, between

theirs and that of the too credulous and oversimple, conducive to real knowledge of mankind, which young men should cultivate, as I did when I set about studying it in Paris, for the purpose, I may admit, of turning into books whatever learning I might acquire in society. For I then became a regular *littérateur*, and I worked hard to overcome my many deficiencies. I got myself launched into the social circles which are facile enough for any one with a few introductions. I made acquaintances rapidly among public men, noted in politics, science, literature and art, whose *status* there is so high and so secure. I became soon intimate with various celebrities, Frenchmen and foreigners, and for several years I mixed in a wide range of excellent society. A person laying himself out for it for an object, and following that up with a will, is sure to get on in Paris, if starting in the right way and under good guidance.

But to give me any claim to a permanent place in the round game of social intercourse, I felt the necessity of doing something. My indifferent poem was as yet my only title; but though it went to a second edition, and was to a certain degree known and tolerated, I had sufficient critical conscience to feel that I ought to suppress it as much as possible—and I did so.

But I strove to supply its place by other matter, and I wrote freely for London periodicals, going over there occasionally to see editors and others connected with various branches of my new profession. On the first of these visits I carried with me three papers on very different subjects, written with difficulty and diffidence. I took them to the publishing office of one of the then popular magazines, saw a partner of the firm, and offered him my manuscripts. He was civil but cool ; and he asked me to make it convenient to call again in three days, by which time the editor (some mysterious, oracular unknown) would he said be able to make up his mind about my articles. I was punctual, prepared for rejection, and striving to work my anxiety down to calmness. I was shown into the publisher's private den ; and in a few minutes the same gentleman joined me with some printed papers in his hand, a bland expression on his countenance, and an air of respectful vivacity far different from what I had observed before ; but even this combination of good omens failed to inspire me with confidence.

"I thought," said the publisher, "you would like to see the proof-sheets of your articles, so I had them struck off at once. Here they are."

Proof sheets ! Articles—in the plural ! "*All* my little ones !" already read, accepted, and struck

off! Lives there an author with soul so dead as not to sympathize with the pleasant throb with which I heard the words, as well as with my subsequent satisfaction, when I actually touched and carried away the ten or twelve guineas (whatever it was) the first money I had earned by literary labour?

How thoroughly this receipt of cash for work done seemed to wipe out the loss of twenty times as much for work thrown away, and how my few pages of prose balanced the account against the hundreds of lines which I had once believed to be poetry! I hope there is no weakness in acknowledging that this was a very joyous event to me, that I stepped with a lighter tread, looked forward with a brighter eye; that crossing from Dover to Calais in a gale of wind, I felt that the packet-boat ran no risk, bearing me and my fortunes—though my Commentaries in the pages of the periodical were not actually between my teeth as Cæsar carried his—and that when I returned home, Paris did not seem quite wide enough to hold me.

What a glorious thing encouragement is to an active and ambitious temperament. Oh, ye parents and guardians, editors and reviewers, who have so much in your power towards teaching the young idea how to shoot—be generous, indul-

gent, and tolerant, and help it to shoot straight, so as that it may not miss the mark. Think, when you raise the cane or nib the pen—or dip it in ink, even if it be a steel one—what a world of mischief you may do to some tender and sensitive nature, by striking too hard or puncturing too deep. Be gentle and forbearing. Pray spare the rod, even at the risk of spoiling the child; and remember that the field of literature is wide enough, to let some wild weeds live without any risk of damage to the flowers.

I soon contributed a succession of papers to various publications; and associating myself with other writers, I started one called ‘The Paris Monthly Magazine,’ which was a compound of original articles, with selections from the English periodicals. I lost money by this undertaking, but it led to some connections that were cheaply purchased at the price. I became more known, and had it in my power to act on the principle recommended to others in the foregoing passage. I next tried my hand on an article in the ‘Edinburgh Review’ on Modern French Poetry, and I had the pleasure of being almost, if not altogether, the first in introducing to English readers De Béranger, Casimir Delavigne, and De Lamartine, all then rising into reputation in their own country. I was soon avowed to be the author

of the article, and it was a passport to many places, and a title to fellowship with several persons well worth knowing, Denon, Marchangy, Charles Nodier, D'Arlincourt. This was followed up by a series of papers in the 'New Monthly Magazine,' then edited by Thomas Campbell, biographical sketches, with specimens of translations from the works of the poets just named, Pierre Le Brun, and other French writers. I became intimate with all of those, with the exception of Lamartine, who was absent from France for several years, and whom I never knew till after my return from America in 1848, when I used to assist at Madame de Lamartine's agreeable and very intellectual *soirées*. But I saw a great deal of De Béranger, Delavigne, and Le Brun. They were most estimable and valuable associates. Having mentioned the sketches I gave of them and others, I may be excused for introducing some passages from them here, but I cannot in such a work as this intrude the series of literary criticisms which found fitting place and some favour at the period of their publication. Possibly the subject of Modern French Poetry may on some future occasion justify the appearance of an essay already prepared, with some translations from the writings of the authors just mentioned, as specimens of their works. But I now confine myself

to a few brief memoranda of their personal whereabouts.

CASIMIR DELAVIGNE was the second of three brothers, the eldest of whom also displayed considerable dramatic talent, and was the author of several popular pieces. Casimir was born at Havre-de-Grâce in 1794. At the age of seventeen, while yet at college, he published a copy of verses on the birth of the King of Rome, but after that boyish attempt he prudently abstained from appearing before the public until 1810, when he gave to the world his first series of political poems called "*Messéniennes*." The novelty of the idea, and the brilliancy of the execution of these pieces, suiting so well the tone of the period, ensured them prompt success. But their vigorous liberalism mixed with exaggeration, particularly where England was the subject of the poet's dispraise, stamped them as the effusions of a young and heated mind, and gave the author a foremost place in the ranks of opposition. He became at the same time a marked object for Royalist enmity; a new instance of party intolerance, and a lamentable proof that the professors of literature yield so freely to political example.

Poetry is however a great generalizer, and, even when it is decidedly political, is so much woven with imagination, that its realities attract

only a modified hostility. Though one could not hope, in the days I treat of, to meet in the same *salon* two authors of different *couleurs*, a popular play was sure to gain general applause, whether it came from the right side or the left, from Soumet or Arnault—while Marchangy the Avocat-général of Louis XVIII., or Pierre Le Brun the poet of Napoleon, sat side by side in the same box, as I saw them at the first representation of *L'École des Vieillards*, Casimir Delavigne's first comedy.

Delavigne received about this time from M. Parquier, the *garde-de-sceaux*, the nomination of librarian to the chancellerie, and soon after, from Parquier's successor De Peyronnet, the honour of an unmerited removal from his post. On this occasion the Duke of Orleans, Louis-Philippe, with liberal promptitude appointed the poet his own librarian, a situation not subject to the shiftings of ministerial or even monarchical caprice. Delavigne was certainly, De Béranger excepted, the most popular writer of his day ; with the public from his patriotism and the versatility of his talents, with men of letters from his modesty, with his friends from the amiability of his disposition, and with his party from the firmness of his principles. He died young, but lived long enough for an established fame.

PIERRE-JEAN DE BÉRANGER is only known to the world under the humble designation of "Chansonnier." Song-writing was the line which he wisely selected, for the display of powers fitted for the very highest walks of poetry ; and in that form of composition he attained a celebrity and a popularity never excelled.

From two stanzas, which he showed me in manuscript, but which were I believe subsequently published, I am enabled to state on his own authority, that he was born in Paris in the year 1780, that his grandfather was a tailor, he himself an attendant in an inn (kept I believe by his mother), struck by lightning in his youth, apprenticed to a printer, and subsequently a clerk in a public office. In this last humble station he found leisure for the composition of some of the songs which have since become so famous. Entirely self-educated, he acquired a copious command of his native language, the only one he knew ; and his conversation was remarkably rich in thought, and the words required to give it expression. He was a great talker, and of remarkable conversational powers. He has told me that the first books he studied were the Bible and a translation of Homer. In the printing-office he learned the rules of his mother tongue, its orthography and versification. But there is nothing in his songs

to betray any extensive reading beyond the volume of the human mind. His satires against the great Napoleon made the latter laugh, at the wit of the lesson by which he failed to profit. Lucien Bonaparte, the chief patron of letters of his day, became De Béranger's protector. But his exile, and the final fall of the Emperor, by whom during the Hundred Days the poet was offered the office of censor, which he refused, threw him entirely on the resources of his genius. The paltry enmity of the Bourbons on their restoration, deprived him of his place. But this *destitution* was a perfect triumph for the victim. His friends rallied round him. The public bought his songs in thousands. The suppression of the work was decreed by government, and the discovery of *four* copies, in all Paris, rewarded the zeal of the police. De Béranger was prosecuted, and fourteen of his most popular songs selected to support the charges of having outraged morality, insulted religion, offended the king's person, and excited the public to sedition. He was acquitted on the first and third charges, found guilty on the second and fourth, by a majority of seven to five of the jury; but it was discovered by the judges, after the verdict was returned, that the fourth charge (which was literally "d'avoir provoqué au port public d'un signe extérieur de ralliement

non autorisé par le Roi") was not qualified as an offence by the criminal code. De Béranger then stood liable to punishment on the second charge only ("d'avoir commis le délit d'outrage à la morale publique et religieuse"), and his sentence for this offence was three months' imprisonment, a fine of 500 francs (£20), and the suppression of his work.

The announcement of so slight a penalty or so serious a charge, the small majority of the jury by which he was convicted, and the general feeling that his prosecution was prompted much less by respect for morality and religion, than by political malice, left De Béranger no triumph to desire. He enjoyed his imprisonment, and paid his fine; for the first was a continued *fête* while his wealthy friends showered offers upon him which, if accepted, would have repaid his forfeited francs a hundredfold. But he declined all pecuniary assistance. The profits of his publication and his subsequent works in many editions, produced him an annual income on which he lived, independent and content.

In this true respectability De Béranger passed his remaining years. The soundness of his judgment caused him to be consulted in almost every important political question by several leading members of the *Côté Gauche*, during the succes-

sive reigns of Louis XVIII., Charles, and Louis-Philippe ; and I have frequently seen him in *salons*, with General Foy, Benjamin Constant, Manuel, and other leading members of the Chambers, the centre of listening circles as he held forth on all the topics of public interest which those eminent orators had discussed. A man possessing such conversational talent and so intently listened to has no doubt had many of his sayings recorded. I shall content myself with citing one, which I heard him utter ; when urged to compose a song against a celebrated statesman then in disgrace, "*A la bonne heure, quand il sera ministre*" was De Béranger's reply. I should be glad to see this *mot* reprinted in as many multiplications as the copies of his songs, which when I knew him so long ago had amounted to about 40,000, but are now entirely beyond my counting.

After many years' interval, I found De Béranger living in a small house at Passy, when I returned to Paris from Italy in the year 1848. His great reputation and increased influence in the liberal party had led to many offers for his entering into the active duties of public life. These I believe he had uniformly declined during the existence of the Bourbon monarchy. And even, at the time I now speak of, when a republic was re-established, but on its temporary trial, he resisted all

persuasion to become a candidate for the office of representative of the people. He had received my visit with the utmost kindness and cordiality; and in returning it in person at the apartments I occupied in the Place de la Madeleine, he assured me that his doing so, for the sake of old recollections and regard, was a rare exception to his general rule. And he added, with possibly a slight betrayal of vanity, or egotism, or self-satisfaction—it is hard to separate the shades of those blended characteristics—that he had studiously persisted in not returning the visit some time previously paid to him by Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, at that time a member of the Chamber of Deputies, and a candidate for the dignity of President of the Republic.

Yet on this occasion De Béranger impressed me forcibly with a feeling of his amiable and unassuming nature. He reverted in most kind terms to our former intercourse, to the slight literary services I had rendered him, before his great celebrity became a *fait accompli*, and he recalled with some humour, mixed with the usual seriousness of his discourse, a little scene of social embarrassment, when one day so many years before, Casimir Delavigne, Pierre Le Brun, Sir Robert Adair, and one or two more formed the party at a Christmas dinner at my house. On

that occasion I wished to give our French guests a specimen of a real English repast, in which the inevitable roast beef, turkey, and plum-pudding figured conspicuously. The *pièce de résistance* and the *volaille* were not novelties, but the national pudding assuredly was ; and the suppressed alarm of the poetical trio when this wonderful condiment was placed on the table, in flames of burning brandy, was only equalled by the courage which worked itself up to the sticking-place, when they unflinchingly partook of the pudding, the perfect *politesse* with which they praised it, and the amazing good-breeding with which De Béranger requested to be helped a second time, merely out of the respect (as he afterwards assured me) which he felt for the national feeling, entertained as he supposed by his hosts, for “l’atroce plat de douceur” which he then tasted for the first and last time.

The interview in which my truly distinguished visitor reverted to this slight prandial anecdote was the last I ever had with him. I left France soon afterwards, and when I returned the President was an Emperor ; and the Poet, after having undergone the duty of some few attendances in the Chamber of Deputies, to which he had been elected *nolens volens*, had retired again into an obscurity, much more illustrious than his passing dignity, and some years later he died, in the full

honours of a celebrity unblemished and almost unrivalled.

PIERRE ANTOINE LE BRUN.—It would have been difficult to select one from among the French dramatic writers of the present century, to rank with the poets already noticed, were the choice confined to considerations of mere talent as confined to the stage. Several writers of great merit were living and in the full bloom of reputation when Le Brun acquired his sudden fame, as a bold reformer of traditional monotony, by his adaptation of Schiller's tragedy of 'Marie Stuart.' He had the good luck to find admirable support from the acting of Talma and Mademoiselle Duchesnois, ably assisted by their colleagues of the Théâtre Français. Lemerrier, the two Arnaults, father and son, Viennet, Giroux, Liadres, Ancelot, Soumet, Jouy, were Le Brun's great rivals in the line he chose, Casimir Delavigne soon entering the course, and these distinct from the chief writers of comedy, in all its different shades, of whom by far the most eminent was Scribe, from that industrious versatility of talent which in modern days has known no equal.

But I place the name of Le Brun in these volumes, because I knew him personally, and held him in high esteem for his sterling qualities of mind and heart. He was born in Paris in 1786,

and had even before his tenth year made some effort at dramatic composition. When the Emperor Napoleon was on a visit to the College of St. Cyr, in which the young poet was a student, he questioned him as to the chief object he would wish to pursue in life, "*Sire, je veux chanter votre gloire,*" was Le Brun's ready and lucky reply. His subsequent literary career was prosperous. But while following in the old routine of the French classical poets, he acquired a competent knowledge of the English language, and found in the study of Shakspeare, stripped of his masquerade translations, inspiration sufficient to effect his designs against the idolized formalities of the French stage. Mastering German and Spanish, he made his choice of a subject, and not venturing to introduce Shakspeare all at once to the nervous fastidiousness of Parisian taste, he fixed upon the 'Marie Stuart' of Schiller as the medium for his experiment, which was in every sense successful. The death of Napoleon in 1822 enabled Le Brun to chant the fall as he had already "sung the glory" of his idol. The fine lyric poem which he published on that occasion, obtained him the honour of being deprived by the government of Louis XVIII. of the small pension of 1200 francs (£50) a year, the only favour he ever received from the sovereign to whose memory he sang a dirge.

Le Brun when I knew him was married, and living a retired life of moderate independence and quiet happiness. He afterwards published several collections of poems of great merit, and produced at least one dramatic piece. Having lost sight of this most amiable and truly gentlemanlike *littérateur* for a very long time, I scarcely know, though I have reason to believe, that death has deprived his friends of a real ornament to the social circle, and given me the privilege of including his name among those slight records, from which I have, with a very few exceptions, excluded the names of my many living friends and old associates.

My acquaintanceship with ALPHONSE DE LAMARTINE was so slight and passing, at the time of his high political position during the revolutionary days of 1848, that I for that reason alone should not feel justified in placing his name here at all, but to express the great admiration for his genius, which first turned my attention to modern French poetry, and led to the translations and critical sketches already mentioned and which I may possibly at some future time reproduce.

At this period I also became acquainted with Washington Irving, to whose encouragement I owed my first successful attempt in literature, to an extent that entitles me to mention it at all. It was by his advice that I put into the shape

of, Tales of Real Life, combined with Personal Adventure, some light sketches, one or two of which I had offered to Campbell for his magazine, but which were rejected by some subaltern *employé* entrusted by him with the perusal of contributions. Irving expressed himself indignant at this, when I showed him some of my manuscript at his own request. And, stimulated by his approval, I enlarged and fashioned the materials sufficiently to form a good-sized octavo volume; and I took my manuscript to London, and offered it for publication.

Four publishing houses of eminence, one after another, declined the risk, giving me plainly to understand, with such qualifying consolations as they could afford me, that my matter was not worth printing. Disappointed and discomfited, I took my manuscript back to Paris, and thence to Versailles, to which quiet place I retired, as more suited to my circumstances, and the baffled hopes of literary progress. I still however went on writing for magazines and reviews, increasing my circle of acquaintance in Paris and London, which now included Thomas Moore, Thomas Campbell, with several minor stars in the higher firmament of authorship, which I then barely hoped to reach as one of the undistinguished *nebulæ*.

Among the amateur writers little known, but

